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**Books by John P. Coyle, D. D.**

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THE SPIRIT IN LITERATURE AND LIFE.

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THE IMPERIAL CHRIST. Crown 8vo, \$1.50.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & CO.

BOSTON AND NEW YORK.





John P. Cloyd

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# The Imperial Christ

BY ✓

JOHN PATTERSON COYLE, D. D.

*WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION*

BY

GEORGE A. GATES, D. D.

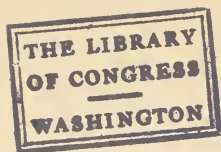
PRESIDENT OF IOWA COLLEGE



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DEDICATED

TO THE BELOVED MEMORY OF HIM BY WHOM  
THESE SERMONS WERE WRITTEN

*"O Saul, it shall be  
A Face like my face that receives thee ; a Man like to me,  
Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever ; A Hand like this hand  
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee ! See the Christ stand !"*

*Browning's "Saul."*

## NOTE.

THE publication of this volume was undertaken at the earnest request of friends and parishioners who desired to retain in permanent form words which had been helpful and inspiring to them, and to preserve the fragrant memories of a noble and self-forgetting life.

My thanks are gratefully offered to the many friends who have so freely given their assistance in its preparation : to President Gates for his labor of love in the sketch of his friend's life ; to Dr. James M. Whiton, of "The Outlook," for careful revision of the sermons ; to the group of North Adams friends who gave time and thought to the choice of the sermons to be used ; to an honored friend for the title given the volume ; and to many others who in various ways have contributed to its completion.

The sermons here included were, with one or two exceptions, first preached to the North Adams people and rewritten for the Denver Church, and were chosen partly for that reason, but chiefly be-

cause they set forth that which Mr. Coyle best loved to preach, the imperial character and position of Jesus.

Whether this volume shall serve the purpose for which it was prepared or not, I can but be thankful for the consolation afforded and the sad hours brightened by the thought and labor given to it.

MARY CUSHMAN COYLE.

NORTH ADAMS, MASS.

*October 19, 1896.*

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## BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

“THE world will be filialized when it is frater-nized.”

The memory which John P. Coyle has left may not be more fittingly characterized than by the above words of his, — words of philosophy, exhortation, and prophecy. Few children of men have been better exemplifications of the filial and fraternal spirit at its best than he was.

How can one write a chapter of biography and do it wisely and fairly who is compelled to confess that he never saw a fault in the friend who is the subject of it? Such is the task laid upon me when asked to compile some introductory personal pages to this volume of sermons. Such a work is a labor of love indeed, but its difficulty is yet more enhanced by reason of the fact that no rebuke for exaggeration or untruthfulness would be so sharp as his. Through this narrow passage lying between a desire adequately to express the exact measure of honor and affection widely and generously bestowed upon him, and on the other hand the hope to avoid the just condemnation of the manly modesty of our friend, an attempt must be made to steer the little craft of this chapter.

Mr. Coyle was a typical American in that his blood was well mixed. Scotch-Irish would describe its predominant elements, but there was a little wholesome mixture of Dutch and English blood "in me, and as I grow older I find it playing the part of a conservative upper house tenacious of the continuities as against the impatient Celtic idealism of my general make-up."

He was specially fortunate in his early home. Fortunate most of all in his parents, of whom he once wrote: "In the self-sacrificing lives of my parents remained to me the vision of the human God when every other divine light was clouded. From my mother I received the never forgotten advice to think fearlessly; and from both father and mother I gained an impression of the objective reality of the spirit of Christlikeness which could not be effaced by years of black doubt and dreary agnosticism. To them belongs the credit if I have been able to think through any one of the problems of the age."

He was born near East Waterford, Juniata County, Pennsylvania, May 3, 1852. He was the second of the ten children of David Scott and Matilda Longwell Coyle. Both parents belonged to that Scotch-Irish race which, coming to this country before the Revolution, settled many sections of Pennsylvania and endured all the hardships of pioneer life.

Mr. Coyle's father was a man of more than

ordinary intelligence, having a good education preparatory to a college course, which ill health prevented his getting. He was a teacher for some time prior to his marriage, when he returned to his father's home near the little hamlet of East Waterford. His health was always precarious, so much so that he was unable to go into the army. He was, however, a hard-working and successful farmer, gaining not riches, for he was too wise to hoard, but for his children what was far better, a solid education and the memory of a home life moving on high planes. The father was a quiet man whose few words were worth hearing. He was a man of sweet and gentle spirit, combined with unswerving integrity; a true man of God, not only righteous, but lovably and gently good.

To the mother was left the discipline of the family, and she was well fitted for it. As frank and free of speech as her husband was reticent, her quick wit, independent spirit, and power of initiative supplemented his conservative, steady, grave character, making them ideal parents, and giving their son, through the harmonious combination of these marked characteristics, a personality of rare beauty and strength.

Mr. Coyle's home was such a one as story-tellers love to describe. They abound in tales of Scotch life as in Maclaren's stories, in biographies like David Livingstone's and John G. Paton's. The family was old school Presbyterian. The older

children were baptized and preached to during their earlier years by an aged Scotch minister, Rev. Andrew Jardine, whose brogue was so heavy as to put him almost beyond the range of intelligibility to the young people. A neighboring Scotch minister, Rev. Mr. Allison, used to visit the family and, according to their national and ecclesiastical customs, take the children on his knee, hear them recite the Shorter Catechism, and give them some psalm to have ready learned for him when he should come again. Mr. Coyle's father and grandfather were elders in the church and usually entertained visiting ministers, so that a religious atmosphere, not only in the home itself, but from its visitors, constantly surrounded the children until grown up. This lad heard only Rouse's version of the psalms in the church; to sing a hymn would have been heretical, and an organ was the summit of sacrilege. At the communion services only those gathered around the Lord's table who had received on the day previous a "token" that they were members of the church in good standing.

Sundays in that home were stiffly observed. Sometimes after all were in bed Saturday night a voice would be raised, "Is the coffee ground?" If not, some one must up and dress and to the kitchen and grind it, else there would be no coffee on Sunday. But the children had their amusements with limitations less felt than realized in later life.

The books on which the children in this home fed had mental and moral vigor in them that would astound later generations of educators and children. They were such as one would now expect to find only in the hands of college students, but were given to these children of ten or twelve.

The parents wisely interested themselves in the education of their children in the home. One quiet study hour was set apart every evening, when no one was allowed to speak from seven to eight; but when the clock struck eight, volumes of questions broke loose, mingled with clatter and somersault and almost inextinguishable ante-bed-time frolic. It was suspected by the children that the silent hour was designed as much for the protection of the parents as for the benefit of the children. There may have been something in it; the two tired parents needed the hour for reading and resting. If the young lad did not exhibit his full share of boyish exuberance in play, then his childhood differed materially from his later life, for one seldom meets a more wide-awake conversationalist than Mr. Coyle. Indeed, stories have come down of how he used to work off his abounding mental vigor when he was very young. The activities of his later life and the direction of them were presaged when, a child of ten or twelve, he used to mount the corner-crib for a rostrum and play orator to an audience consisting of an older sister. His subjects were manifold, ranging from theology to

politics. He gave vociferous vent to the scorn he felt for the various wrongs he could see in the neighborhood. It is said that old neighbors remember hearing some of these speeches half a mile away; later "neighbors" have heard speeches of his of like topic and tendency several thousand miles away.

Such was his home. It was in a neighborhood of such sturdy homes. His mother's family, Longwell, was of Irish descent. Mr. Coyle's great-grandfather on his mother's side came to this country when a young man, and kept up a correspondence with an older brother who was a professor of *belles-lettres* in a college in Cork. There seems to be a line of pedagogic stock in the family. His grandmother's name was Patterson, and she belonged to a well-known and numerous and widely scattered Scotch family of that name in central Pennsylvania. From both grandfathers down to his own time of the war of the Rebellion the family were all ardent Abolitionists. In the later fifties many a fight did the youngsters have with their schoolmates, maintaining such opinions as they heard at home.

This part of the State was settled early by people who remained on the old homesteads or in the near community generation after generation and prided themselves on their right to the country. They were stern, upright, with a pride of intellect that makes it no wonder their sons studied the-

ology, and no wonder that other families coming in were influenced toward a dignified and wholesome life. None were wealthy: all well-to-do and self-respecting. Such communities seem rare nowadays, when the modern marvelous conveniences of travel seem to be bringing in a later type of nomad. Such a community was no small part of the educational influence surrounding the youth of Mr. Coyle. This communal atmosphere helped shape his spirit and determine his career as really as the home and schools.

Mr. Coyle was fortunate again in his teachers. His first schoolhouse was of logs, and stood in a clearing with primeval forest on three sides of it, a fact which was a beautiful memory to him in his manhood. Here he received most thorough training in the fundamental branches under a Miss Lucy Price, who seems to have been a born teacher. She found this bright boy interesting and responsive in the studies then mostly in vogue, such as grammar, mental arithmetic, and beginning algebra. She used to say that those Coyle children kept her studying to stay ahead of them.

At fourteen he left home to work in a country grocery store, after a year of which he entered the Millersville Normal School, where he remained two years. Mr. Coyle's father preserved for years, as among his choicest treasures, a letter written by the lad from this school, in which he stated that



having recently become a Christian he had decided to be a minister. About this time his father moved to Port Royal, Pennsylvania, a small town on the Pennsylvania Railroad, that the children might have the advantage of the fine academy there. This institution, known as Airy View Academy, like the New England academies of the period, was the centre of culture for the community and a large farming region about it. It stimulated the ambition of the boys and girls for genuine knowledge and bred high character. It was at this time in charge of Mr. David Wilson, who was well known and is still remembered all through that part of the country as *the* educator of that part of Pennsylvania. His academy course laid solid foundation for college and theological seminary.

He entered Princeton in 1872, his academy course enabling him to make the sophomore class.

Like hundreds of the sturdy youth of America, Mr. Coyle earned his way through college by teaching and acting as tutor. He worked tremendously and lived on the smallest outlay, making every material sacrifice that was fairly possible. He graduated high in rank in a class of seventy-one members.

His first year in college he ranked sixteenth in the class ; in the second year he rose to the eleventh position ; in his last year his grade was sixth.



That record is what we should expect of a youth like this for two reasons: the ablest college students almost without exception raise their relative grades during their college course; moreover, the studies in which a young man of his type of mind would most surely excel are the more severely testing ones where the student must do his own thinking, such as psychology, ethics, political science, and philosophy. In five of the studies of the senior year his rank was between ninety-nine and one hundred. In mathematical studies he proved himself also very strong.

The mediæval discipline reckoned logic and mathematics in the same department, with metaphysics closely allied. It was in these departments that Mr. Coyle's mind was particularly strong even from childhood. He says of himself that at a very early period he found his mind resting in "about the only system of *a priori* theology that can satisfy the demands of logic, — Supralapsarian Calvinism. I took the same kind of non-spiritual and non-moral satisfaction in Calvinism that I did in the Binomial Theorem, and that is how it happened my mind was at ease. It was the kind of mind that liked that kind of thing. I was a mathematician by right of inheritance from both parents.

"While in college I found my philosophical consciousness, as everybody with any sort of head did, at the touch of President McCosh's magnifi-

cent personality. I had begun to be dissatisfied with algebraic theology, and to listen to the voice of the Zeit-Geist."

At the end of his second year in college he was elected one of the seven speakers of "Junior Orator" night of commencement. At his graduation the next year he was chosen by his classmates to the honorable position for the "Memorial Oration" on Class Day.

The first year after his graduation he was a teacher in a military school in Stamford, Connecticut. While there he received an invitation to an instructorship in Latin in Princeton, which he accepted and held for two years, from 1877 to 1879.

Nearly all men of Mr. Coyle's virility of mind seem compelled to pass through a period more or less prolonged of great mental and spiritual struggle. This was true of him all through his college years, but it seemed to reach a climax during his tutorship in Princeton. He had dedicated himself to the Christian ministry, and was now finding what so many have found, tremendous obstacles across his path. The atmosphere of Princeton at this time was by no means soporific. Over in the Theological Seminary was the venerable Dr. Hodge "spending his last breath in proving, with frequent sobbing and tears, — which arguments, however illegitimate, were to those who knew the sublime and childlike sincerity of the man very convincing, — that Darwinism was desolate atheism." Dr.

McCosh, on the other hand, was defending Darwinism at a time when such defense cost something.

In 1887 the writer of this chapter, calling on Dr. McCosh, ventured to suggest that some of the younger men of America were keenly appreciative of the debt we were then owing to him for the stalwart position he had taken some years earlier touching the changes in philosophical thought necessitated by the growing confidence in the general theory of evolution. He will not forget how that venerable man stopped in his walk, turned about, and with much impressiveness said, "I told them, I told them the theory of descent was true, and they would not believe me." It was always somewhat difficult for him to understand how it could be that when he "told them" anything, they should have any hesitation in accepting what he told them as a finality.

Mr. Coyle says of these days in Princeton: "The leaders of Christian thought in the college, and all over the English-speaking world for that matter, were inventing compromises and fixing limits to which science might go without altogether sacrificing the theistic proofs. But Supralapsarian Calvinism had not prepared me to accept compromises. There was a considerable circle of us who thought we saw through it. We were told of no theism that did not depend upon the violation, once or twice at least, of the genetic continuity. The college instructors, though more ready than

Dr. Hodge to recognize the actual conquests of science, were really fighting the same battle as he, and we knew it; they were denying the primary postulate of modern science. It seemed to us that we must either be thoroughly anti-scientific, or else carry out consistently the logic of the scientific principle."

There are few more interesting parts of a man's life than that which reveals the growth of his maturest convictions through the periods of intellectual and spiritual birth up to higher planes. Fortunately, Mr. Coyle has left for us, in a statement presented to his installing council, in 1887, in North Adams, his own account of this period of his life. The following, as the last two quotations, is from that statement:—

"For my own part I could not decide what to do, and began a series of oscillations between the two extremes which must have made the impression upon my acquaintances that I was the most contradictory person alive. One week I was a scoffing agnostic going about stirring up controversy wherever I could; the next, by a masterly act of volition and a special season of prayer and sometimes fasting, I had become a vehemently evangelical Christian, organizing prayer circles at all hours of the day or night and laying hold of men to drag them into the Kingdom of Heaven. I passed between these extremes so suddenly and so often that many doubted my honesty, and it

seems to me now a wonder they did not doubt my sanity. Maybe they did. For the most part, however, I kept the two lives distinct. I had too much respect and affection for the men whose society I sought in my religious mood to try my dialectics very often on them. It was another class of Christians whom I delighted to torment. I was altogether sincere in both my characters. I maintained religious exercises for the reason that having been born and reared a Christian I thought the presumption was to be regarded as in favor of Christianity until it had been overthrown; and that it had been I never affected to believe. I was only an agnostic, not an infidel. By means of conditional clauses I preserved my honesty in these devotions, and sometimes there was in them a vast deal of genuine fervor.

“I never scoffed at the name of Christ, and if any one did so in my presence it sickened me as if my father or mother had been assailed. But I was unable to say a word in his defense, for I had been taught that the only logical alternatives were to reject him altogether, or to accept him as a corollary to the current philosophical theism, and it was that which had crumbled under the blows of agnostic criticism. A lingering personal affection for the Christ on one hand, and a conviction of the truth of scientific agnosticism on the other, and the belief that the two could not be harmonized, produced in me that dual personality almost

as distressing and strange as the now famous case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. This condition of affairs continued four years after my graduation. I was aware that the agnostic state while superior intellectually was vastly inferior to the other in moral tone. It was my Mr. Hyde, and it frightened me to observe that it was growing more persistent, and refused to go as readily as it once did in answer to prayer and the bidding of the will, and it began to distinctly advocate the letting down of the high moral standard I had always maintained. I saw, much less clearly to be sure than I see now, and yet with sufficient distinctness to induce definite action, that a crisis had come, and that there was no help for me where I was, and I resigned my tutorship in the college, to go upon a pilgrimage to find somewhere or other the truth, if there was any to be found. Plans to go to Europe having fallen through, I went to Chicago, having heard that Professor Francis L. Patton, now of Princeton, was unlike every one else in his manner of dealing with inquirers. Having told the Faculty of the Seminary that I was an intellectual nihilist who believed no single concrete proposition that could be named, that I came as a truth-seeker, and that if I found Christianity to be what it claimed, my lifework should be to preach it, I was reluctantly allowed to matriculate.

“I have never been able distinctly to recall the experiences of the first few months I was in Chi-

cago. I read nothing. Dr. Patton never lectured. His classes were debating clubs, where everybody talked at once except the professor, who sat and looked on as serene as Jove. So much like a strange dream does it seem to me that it would not much surprise me to learn that I had been out of my senses, and that the Northwestern Theological Seminary was an asylum where I recovered my mental equipoise. Dr. Patton, without seeming to impart anything, treated me so skillfully that in four or five months I was on solid foundations that have never since been moved. He did not teach me his system, for, like Socrates, he held his office to be that of intellectual midwife. The little I know of his distinctive theology I do not much like, and I have no reason to suppose that he likes mine any better; but to him I owe it largely that I have one at all.

“The first step that did not have to be retraced was to ignore and override the supposed contradiction between scientific agnosticism and a personal love and loyalty to the Christ, who still lingered in my affections. It was a meagre conception I could form of him, for it must be held subject to all the possible results of criticism. It was partly an ideal, partly an admitted concrete historical fact, partly a thing I had seen with my own eyes chiefly in my parents, and to a very small extent realized in my own life. In determining to follow and worship such a Christ as I knew, I broke the



thralldom of intellectualism and restored to my spiritual part the right to exercise its functions. I also thereby set at defiance the implicit assumption of the current philosophical theism that the rightfulness of Christ's claim to discipleship is contingent upon a mere corollary to the conclusiveness of its own proofs. Agnosticism had taken away my God and philosophical theism had promised to restore Him, but had failed. I had waited years, had traversed the arguments over and over again with a bias in favor of theism, but was compelled to render the reluctant verdict that, as between the two, agnosticism had the best of it. But I had learned that agnosticism was morally debilitating, while the service of the Christ, even in spite of what I supposed to be reason, was elevating. It seemed as though I was obliged to choose between the Good and the True. I had chosen the Good, and somehow satisfied my mind that I was not thereby compromising the True. I suspect that my reasoning to that effect at the time was far fetched, though now I see that no such dilemma should ever have been presented, and it was the fault of official theism that it ever was.

“Beginning to serve the Christ as a worthy Master, independent altogether of his relations to theism, I found that soon a new Spirit began taking ‘the things of Christ’ and showing them to me, something like as the Spirit of the Age had forced upon my attention the things of science and



compelled me to admit their truth. This Spirit did not obtrude itself upon my notice, and my knowledge of its operations is the result of subsequent analysis. But it was a still greater, more positive and authoritative, more thoroughly objective and personal spirit than the Zeit-Geist. Its appeal was not to my intellect alone, but to my whole manhood, and it made me feel that it would be mortal sin not to follow its teachings. It showed me larger and deeper things than the Zeit-Geist had shown, and much extended my horizon of true knowledge. In my enthusiasm over the new-found method I jumped at conclusions and reconstructed too hastily, and built into my system much material old and new that had to be taken out again. But the unmistakable things of Christ were being gradually revealed and proven beyond doubt by the testimony and authority of that Spirit. It has been shown to me, and so thoroughly am I convinced of it that I will stake my destiny on its truth, that Christ came from and returns to the Eternal One ; that he is entitled to the name of the Eternally Begotten Son of the agnostic's Unknown God ; that this Spirit which testified these things is at once his Spirit and the Spirit of the Unknown. This persuasion of the absolute and unqualified deity of Christ is strongest when I am in the clearest and most elevated mood intellectually and morally, or else when I am engaged in disinterested service of others. So

far from conflicting with the scientific principle it rather completes and harmonizes the actual results and prophetic suggestions of science. If there is any mysticism in it, it is not one that depends upon a temporary paralysis of the rational faculties or a darkening of the true external senses. So far from being a subjective impression it responds in a preëminent degree to all the scientific tests of an objective perception. Undue introspection, self-seeking, or any other perversion of the objective faculties or altruistic impulses causes the proof of his deity rather to disappear. From all which I am prepared to maintain that my persuasion of that deity is of the nature of true objective knowledge. It has taken possession of my life as the one truth worth knowing, the truth in the light of which I am to judge all other alleged truths, and upon which I am to base all my hopes.

“This is not a truth which necessitates any conflicts with scientific agnosticism. The Unknown is still as inscrutable as agnosticism ever declared It to be. No real conception of It is possible. But if Christ is Its eternally begotten Son, the same in substance and co-equal with It, we are justified in forming a symbolical conception of It which cannot fail to be relatively true, as of the Worthy Father of such a Son. In spite, therefore, of the breakdown of philosophical theism, I claim the right to describe the Unknowable as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, a description indefinite

enough to satisfy Herbert Spencer's demand that all conceptions of the Unknowable be at once symbolical and nascent, and yet one that warrants me in throwing my life into his arms with a childlike abandon that sets my heart forever at rest."

In a late sermon of Mr. Coyle occur these words: "Dr. McCosh, who passed away the other day full of years and honor, was my master in philosophy. I do not hold as he did. . . . He is my master, not because he holds my mind in thrall, but because he set it free and gave it a method and a stimulus. He is the author of my philosophical life, in that but for him I might never have had any such life. So Jesus is the author of my social ideal whether he ever held it or not; it is founded upon him and springs from his spirit whether it was ever in his mind or not."

Mr. Coyle is not the only man of his generation who found rough traveling during the times when tremendous intellectual strides were demanded of young men in their mature student years, from '75 to '85. It was the birth-time of modern philosophy. That philosophy, made imperative by the achievements of physical science, the universalizing of the theory of evolution, is the greatest generalization the mind of man has ever known. It culminates in a complete Unity philosophy. That philosophy is as yet by no means finished, but its main foundations have been laid not to be moved.

Mr. Coyle matured the germ thoughts expressed in substance in the above quotation, and some of the choicest of them appear in this book. These views are found most completely elaborated in his other volume, "The Spirit in Literature and Life."

In the seminary vacation from April to September, 1880, he preached in a home missionary Presbyterian church in Farmer City, Illinois. In April, 1881, he was licensed to preach by the now somewhat famously conservative Huntingdon Presbytery of Pennsylvania. In October of the same year he accepted a call to the Union Church in Ludlow, Massachusetts, where he was ordained and installed May 3, 1882, — his thirtieth birthday.

Ludlow was a small manufacturing village, with the limitations of all such villages, into which he came as a beautiful, light-giving presence. People of all classes came to realize that the bright-faced, boyish-looking man who met every one, old and young, with such ready comradeship, was thoroughly genuine, unselfish to a fault, truthful in all his relations to himself, his friends, his church, and his theology, absolutely fearless in his pursuit of truth, and in life and spirit a true follower of Jesus Christ, for whom no day or hour was a vacation from earnest service of his Master.

It is deeply interesting to recall the great emphasis which, in these Ludlow sermons, he laid upon

*unselfishness*; it was a continually recurring theme, — the beauty of and the imperative demand for unselfishness, — Jesus, the Head Man of the race, because the ideally unselfish man, — the life given to service for others the only true life. These and kindred subjects were so often touched upon as to create an impression which could not be effaced from the minds of the hearers. This teaching was made most effective by a life of service for all members of the little village, without regard to creed or condition. In every way he sought to uplift and brighten their lives, giving them active help, cheering words, and tender sympathy, as each was required. So he went into their homes, and where they were discouraged with poverty and monotony he cheered them with hope of better days, which he often was able to help to bring. Often, when the neglect, or worse than the neglect, of husband and father had brought desolation, his fearless indignation and persistent efforts were able to bring the man to a sense of his duty and obligation; or in case of sore distress, when they were dying in filth and neglect, he watched with the sick and suffering.

He was very successful in efforts for the community life, especially in the establishment of a reading-room, and later in starting a library, which was so eagerly welcomed by the people that a member of the company gave to the village an endowed library, with a suitable building.

Mr. Coyle succeeded in gaining the confidence both of the mill-owners, with their agent, Mr. L. H. Brigham, and of the employees, so that when a strike occurred, two years after he left Ludlow, his service as arbitrator was sought by the men and accepted by Mr. Brigham. One of the best pieces of writing that he ever did was an article published in the "Homiletic Review" of January, 1893, under the title, "What the Workingman may ask of the Minister." After speaking of the necessity that the minister should not degenerate into a demagogue, but be in sympathetic relations with the employer, he says:—

"In this age of democracy the man who needs to condescend to get on a common footing with the wage earner has a natural blemish which unfits him for the sacred office of the Christian ministry. Nor need he think to succeed by finding a church that wants a man of that type. There are, unfortunately, many such churches, but they ought not to have what they want. What they need is an apostolic man of the opposite stamp to convert them, or destroy them if they are past conversion. The one thing worse than a clerical snob is a church full of snobs."

Partly because of his engagement to a member of the church, partly that he might be near the New York libraries, he resigned at the end of two years, against the earnest protests of the Ludlow people. In January of 1884 he became pastor of

the Morrisania Congregational Church, New York city. February 7, 1884, he married Miss Mary Cushman, daughter of his predecessor in Ludlow. Two children were born to them : David Cushman, and Grace Longwell, both born in North Adams. Their home life was ideal. There was perfect sympathy between husband and wife in all the realms of his activity, thought, and purpose. The home was under the complete domination of conscience and affection.

It was at this time that the writer of this chapter first met him, sometimes at a little club of a dozen ministers of all denominations in New York city, sometimes in connection with the New Jersey Association, with which company of Congregational ministers he often met, attracted by the fellowship he found among its members, which at that time included such men as Dr. James M. Whiton, Dr. Amory H. Bradford, and Dr. William De Witt Hyde. In both these places he soon showed himself an inspiring talker and profound thinker. I am sure there is not one of that company of men who would not give him a high prominence among us in ability to take the lead in the keenest philosophical discussions. It was through such discussions as these that he was coming to be known for the power and spirit that was in him, so that it was not surprising that the strong church in North Adams, Massachusetts, which had enjoyed the ministry of men like Dr. Washington



Gladden, Dr. Llewellyn Pratt, and Dr. Theodore T. Munger, should turn to this young man and find in him a worthy successor of all who had gone before him.

The North Adams pastorate was somewhat more than eight years long. In the fall of 1894 he reluctantly sundered the relation with this church, into which his very life had gone, and accepted the pastorate of the First Congregational Church at Denver, Colorado. November 2, 1894, he began his Denver ministry. Just three months later he was stricken down with neuralgia of the heart, followed in two days by a valvular trouble of the heart itself. After three days of severe illness he rallied, and was for some days supposed to be beyond danger. Then he was taken suddenly worse, and died February 21, 1895. It seems probable that he had had light attacks a year or two before, and that the disease had fastened its fatal grip upon him before he left North Adams. Undoubtedly the change to the higher altitude hastened the end. Funeral services were held in the church in Denver, President W. F. Slocum, Jr., of Colorado College, and others speaking.

The final service was in his own church in North Adams, most tenderly endeared to him by his longest, maturest, and best ministry. The city which he loved and lifted to higher municipal consciousness furnishes the resting-place of his body. Professor John Bascom, of Williams College, a friend



close to him in profoundest intellectual and spiritual sympathy, spoke the last words of affectionate farewell.

Before the close of this pastorate, Mr. Coyle was the foremost citizen of North Adams. Of him it can be truly said, as rarely of men, that he magnified his office; he was the minister, the Christian minister, first of his church, then of the community, with a rapidly increasing influence far beyond its borders.

He believed in his church, and made his church believe in itself. He carried into it a royal and mighty enthusiasm. His church was a place of life. There was the air about it of not merely getting on with the regular routine of worship and meetings, but it was a centre of intense and high activities. The strong leader in all its work was Mr. Coyle himself. For him to touch any company or minor organization or movement or purpose was to give it of his abounding life. Whatever discouragements or sense of failure he may have known, he had an exceptionally helpful ability to keep those feelings to himself. What he gave out was hope and courage and cheer and enthusiasm. His idea was that it should be a democratic church, not one supported and administered by the few best able financially to carry on its work, but thoroughly and in every best sense a church of all the members, prominent and humble, rich and poor, old and young. Its public services were always dignified.

He gave large attention to the order and majesty of the services of worship. He never allowed his own part in the pulpit or any other department of the church work to drop down to the commonplace. But it was the true dignity of earnestness, not merely the stiffness of formality. There was ever present a thoroughly live and energetic purposefulness in all his ministrations. Some of his warmest and closest personal friends, as well as some of the most valued helpers in every high work of the church, were among its humblest members, as this world counts humbleness. On the other hand, no apostle of the commonplace was he, for to him, where human lives and hearts and interests are concerned, there could be no commonplace. He was a man who always honored the true dignities of life. I certainly do not know that I have ever met any man who cared so little for the conventionalities that emphasize unworthy distinctions, neither just nor helpful. He was so far above them that he hardly needed to fight them: he was almost ignorant of their existence. He lived on a spiritual, truly human, therefore truly divine, plane up above those chilling fogs and miasms. There are few pastorates in America that have left behind richer memories or holier affections than that of his in North Adams. The best records of such a work cannot be written, and are inaccessible for the biographer. But there is enough overflow of the spirit that is there in

church and community to give one a vivid realization of the buried treasures in the homes and hearts of the people.

Some of his best work, into which he put the utmost measure of fidelity, was with the children. I have not known of any American preacher who has made so fine a success of the five-minute sermons to children, with which he was accustomed to preface his main morning discourses. The children of the church and congregation were made to feel that he was their sympathetic elder brother. These children's sermons were kept up during the greater part of his ministry. When he stopped once they begged him to begin again. During the last few years he took the unusual course of devoting the entire time on Communion Sundays to the children, partly to secure their attendance on a day when they were likely to be absent, and partly to put in simple form lessons which the elders would best receive in that way.

Some of his most careful preparation for the pulpit was for the prayers. The chief prayer of the Sunday-morning service grew to be a strong and beautiful petition for the people; and certain phrases are remembered and treasured by them, such as the prayer for the nation that "it might be a Messianic nation," and the prayer for the sick "to make efficient the skill of physician and nurse." There were those who said this ten-minute prayer was too long; but others more dis-

cerning found it a most inspiring, purifying, and elevating part of the service. It was not like the perfunctory, mechanical, formal, frigid prayers so often heard in public worship, but real prayer, sacerdotal if one please, in which the congregation was verily edified and forced by the very power and uplift of it to join and be swept along.

In addition to the usual two preaching services in his own church, every third Sunday, in rotation with the other ministers of North Adams, he preached in the afternoon in Blackinton, a small factory village containing a union church. To another village he went once a month for preaching services Sunday afternoon. He did much pastoral work in both these communities. A fine class of Welsh and Scotch people in both places took to him with all their hearts, and he enjoyed his work with them.

When Mr. Coyle first went to North Adams, realizing the importance and difficulties of this large work, he said to the committee that he would remain six years on trial, and then give them a chance to elect him again. Though they professed to have forgotten it, he insisted on abiding by his word, and resigned much against the will of his closest friends. His resignation was sincere. But the vote was unanimous in asking him to remain. Among the people most interested in his staying were the little outlying communities already mentioned. They said, "Every man, woman, and child

wants him to stay." A small boy stepped up to him one day as he was driving through Blackinton, with the question, "Hope you are not going away, Mr. Coyle?" He replied that he could not tell yet. And the boy said very heartily, "We cannot afford to lose such a man as you, Mr. Coyle." From a ten-year-old boy it was amusing and touching. As he had done at Ludlow, Mr. Coyle occasionally watched with the sick here, where a nurse could not be afforded or obtained. To his wife's earnest protests he replied that "it was the only chance he had to do a Christian act which was not professional."

There is no faithful minister of the Gospel who, as he contrasts the ideal of his work with his actual achievements, does not feel that he is more or less of a failure. Probably some expression in the pulpit to that effect called forth the following from one of his most intelligent and sympathetic parishioners:—

"I have felt so strong an inclination to challenge a statement which you made yesterday, that I am going to yield to it. It is not true that you have failed either in your educational or evangelistic work among us, unless you estimate the latter entirely by count of heads. I do not believe the whole character of a church was ever more completely changed in the same space of time, and that under peculiar difficulties at the start. . . . You have united us and changed our ambitions. . . .

The people, as a whole, are not only more intelligent, but are more emotional in the best sense. There is a decided spirit of affection for one another, without regard to social position. Upon individual lives within and without the church, you have had great influence, and I do not mean that you have simply satisfied mental doubts; you have changed characters. . . . This has not been had in the impersonal way. It is not only your message that has wrought this change, but the presence of your life among us. You have a church that loves *you*."

It was an act quite characteristic of him that when he first went to North Adams, though his family was to live in a beautiful parsonage for which they had no furniture nor any money to buy it, he declined to accept any gifts from his people. He gradually furnished the house as he could save the money, though it required some years. Some of his people were offended at his strong position, but on the whole he gained more than he lost. People were compelled to respect him; they knew he could not be bought. This is his statement of his view:—

"There is one kind of self-love that must be cherished. Not that which loves life more than all things, but that which, recognizing that there is a manhood more noble than life, scorns the temptation to sacrifice that manhood. Duty may call one to lay down his life for others, and every noble

impulse may second the call ; but duty never demands or justifies the surrender of one's manhood. No sacrifice of manhood can do anything but harm to others, and therefore unselfishness never demands it. This manhood which we are to cherish with such jealousy is a kind of super self or self beyond the self. It can never be injured except by the consent and connivance of the lower self, and therefore one of the best exercises of self-conquest is that involved in protecting one's manhood ; and it takes not selfishness but self-respect to do it. . . .

“It may seem to many persons ungracious in a pastor to announce to his people that he does not wish to receive gifts of value even as tokens of friendship. . . . It is not because I do not wish to win your affection and expressions of affection. I covet nothing more, . . . but it must be on equal terms. I am a poor man and cannot cope with you who are rich in exchanging gifts ; and my self-respect would not allow me to be always the receiver and never the giver. If you express your affection for me in gifts of value, I also have an affection for you and I must reciprocate in kind some time, and you would be much surprised if I sent you a fifty-dollar bill. You see although I am a minister, I am also, and still more, a man, and I welcome affection, not as a minister, but as a man, and I must repay it also as a man. I do not want gifts of value from the rich, therefore, because



I am poor and cannot afford it ; and I do not want them from the poor because they are poor and cannot afford it. Moreover, it is, as you know, a principle that gifts should always be exchanged only on the plane where the parties are equal. All transactions on other planes should be business transactions and by definite contract. Gifts of friendship by a law of taste should be without commercial value.

“There is another reason why I desire that no expressions of friendship come to me of commercial value. This church is, I am glad to say, made up of rich and poor together. I seek to win the love of all, and the persons whose love I most covet are those with rich souls, and I do not care whether their pockets are rich or not. I therefore desire that tokens of affection shall be measured out to me in a coin that is common to rich and poor alike. I do not want the poor man to feel that he is in such a matter at a disadvantage as compared with the rich, or that he must make up in servility and excessive show of reverence for what he lacks in money.

“Still another reason why I desire no gifts is that I must preserve, not only my independence, but my reputation for independence. It is charged upon the ministry very often that it has allowed itself to become the paid advocate of the moneyed classes, so that it is not free to take a disinterested part in the solution of certain great social problems.



Even if the charge is unfounded, it is injurious to the influence of the ministry. A man cannot afford thus to throw away his influence. If he has received gifts he is suspected and his words are discounted, whatever side of a controversy he may take."

Indeed, he was a man with a rare sense of carefulness and even punctiliousness in business honor and method. It is the written testimony of the treasurer of Princeton College that he was of "prompt business habits in regard to money matters, and indeed in all relations, while student and instructor. I am sorry to say that such promptness and strict integrity does not always characterize the student life, and I take the more pleasure in certifying that he was a somewhat exceptional character in this respect." Similar testimony is at hand from Ludlow: "His word is as good as a bond can be. He gave evidence of so keen a sense of right in mere secular matters as to gain unlimited confidence in his integrity in all his affairs of life."

He never once accepted hundreds of offers by merchants of "ten per cent reduction to ministers." Nor could he ever be induced to accept clergymen's half-fare privileges on railroads. It is not for his biographer to discuss the question of the correctness of these positions; they are simply recorded here. They show at least a tremendous conscientiousness carried out at no small cost of

sacrifice. The following letter indicates a phase of the same spirit:—

NORTH ADAMS, September 9, 1893.

MY DEAR BRETHREN OF THE TRUSTEES:— I do not think that while things are in their present state I can continue to preach the gospel of unselfishness while I draw a full salary. I therefore return to you one half of my month's salary, and will continue to do that each month until times are better.

I do not see how I can get through on these arrangements, for I have no luxuries to cut off, and have been spending it all on current expenses except what I pay for a moderate insurance. But other people are in the same difficulty, and I do not see why I should be free from the common lot.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN P. COYLE.

This letter is a fair picture of the character of the man. It was no exceptional act; he was doing that sort of thing all his life. He is not the only man or only minister who, during the recent hard times, voluntarily reduced his salary, though I do not know of any one who went so far as to bisect it. Such an act could be done from demagogic motives, but Mr. Coyle could not do it so. Not unlikely had the thought of the possibility of such an interpretation entered his mind the horror

of it would have prevented the action. The Trustees did not accept the suggestion.

About this time an appropriate recognition of his ability as student, thinker, preacher, and pastor came to him from Williams College, within five miles of which he had been doing his work for half a dozen years. At their centennial anniversary in October, 1893, the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him.

There are few things in the last two years of his life that interested him more than some special work in which his name is associated with Iowa College. After Rev. Dr. George D. Herron came to the professorship of Applied Christianity in Iowa College in 1893, knowing these two men, I was anxious to have them know each other. An introduction was all that was necessary to interest them in each other in a way and to a degree that I have rarely seen among men. Mr. Coyle was for two years a member of the "Retreat" which, at the invitation of Dr. Herron, has been held in Grinnell for four years. His coming to this company of men was a large contribution in the elements of intellect, spirit, power, and fellowship, as in the other associations in New York city and New Jersey mentioned earlier. He was accorded almost immediately and perfectly naturally a foremost position in every respect. There are some experiences connected with this fellowship that are too sacred for any public press. They must abide

among the holiest memories of the few who passed through them with him.

In this department of Applied Christianity, and in that for which it stands in the college and in its wider work and influence, there was probably no man outside of the immediate college circles so much interested as he ; indeed, even that limitation might perhaps be removed. His sympathy was intense and profound, and expressed in every possible way. He was one of the most profoundly formative influences in giving Mr. Herron confidence to go on with the work he had begun. He gave the first series of "Rand Lectures." This lectureship, established by Mrs. E. D. Rand, provides for an annual course of lectures in connection with the department of Applied Christianity, which are afterward to be published in book form. Mr. Coyle's course was delivered in the college in the winter of 1893-94, and again in connection with the "School of the Kingdom," held in Grinnell in July, 1894. His topic was the "Holy Ghost the Socializer." These lectures have been recently published under the title "The Spirit in Literature and Life." The book is the product of thought which had been ripening for at least ten years. Mr. Coyle presented a brief paper containing the germ of the treatise to a little company of ministers in the pastor's study of the Jersey City Tabernacle, about 1884 or 1885. But for the necessity of completing that most valuable

study, forced upon him by his having accepted the invitation to give these lectures at Iowa College, this maturest expression of his mind would probably not be preserved for us.

This word from one of our number, Rev. Thomas C. Hall, I think fittingly expresses our thought of him : —

“The impression he made upon me was of a man of exceedingly sweet spirit and very remarkable intellectual power. His thought was in the realms less familiar to the English reader than they are to the German transcendental philosopher, but his power of intellectual analysis was remarkably united to a certain power of broad generalization rarely found in such combination. There was a certain picturesque quality to his thought that well fitted him for a place as poet philosopher had God spared him longer to us.”

During the North Adams pastorate there was close fellowship between Mr. Coyle and Professor John Bascom, of Williams College.

Professor Bascom says : —

“Dr. Coyle possessed an original, fruitful, and independent mind. But that which endeared him most to men was a singular and beneficent equipoise between a keenly speculative and an earnestly practical temper. While the most thoughtful found occasion for activity in his discourses, the less thoughtful felt his presence to be encouraging, comforting, stimulating. The common

people knew him gladly. On them rested the heaviest shadow in his early death. I shall always cherish his memory as of one whom it was good to be with."

Rev. B. Fay Mills writes : —

"I with others owe him a debt for his breadth and height and length and depth. He was one of the most symmetrical men I have known. I am glad to believe that he can still work with us for the manifestation of the redemption of the earth."

Mr. Herron contributes this testimony : —

"Take Coyle all in all, I can sum up my thought in saying that he is the most Messianic man I have ever known. During a trying period of his pastorate, I was with him almost night and day for two weeks. Nothing human I have seen is at once so marvelous and fruitful to me as the unconscious and simple Christliness of his life. With a Samson intellect he combined the deepest and most unaffected humility and a kindness towards sinners and sufferers that seemed to make his life one great heart-ache. It is very difficult for me to think of him as other than a living presence. His immense and anxious love seems always personal and at hand, teaching me and judging me."

During the last two or three years of his life many invitations came to him to strong positions in college-work. He was sought for the presidency of more than one institution of learning of high grade. Strong churches endeavored to toll

him away from his North Adams work. The call to Denver was, however, the first successful one. There seemed to be an opportunity there for leadership in the civic influence of a strong church in a young, rapidly growing municipality that offered to a man of his spirit strategic opportunity. It seemed an ideal union between church and minister, and there was promise that the next decade might see work nothing less than magnificent for the Church and Kingdom. He was just ready to fling his life, with the abandonment of redeeming self-sacrifice, into the great, uneasy, materialistic, spiritually crude city under the mountains there waiting to be awakened to higher civic life.

The work began most auspiciously in the three months of his pastorate. He was already winning a foremost position of real power in the whole community. There is wide testimony to the strength of his influence, which had already begun to be developed. Speaking after the manner of men but reverently, it seems to us as if the Lord were very prodigal of great resources of power among men that this work should be cut off before it had fairly begun. But we do not know enough to make it wise to utter such a sentiment.

Mr. Nathan B. Coy, chairman of the committee to secure a new pastor, writes as follows: —

“Dr. Coyle’s short career here was not in vain; the influence of it will never be lost. He has left a lasting impression upon the people. No death



in this community has come with so great a shock or created so profound regret. . . . His name has been so familiarly and favorably known during the brief three months of his ministry that his death came as a personal loss to all. Men who had never seen him or heard him preach, but had through his printed discourses and addresses become acquainted with his beautiful spirit and catholic thought, met on the street to exchange words of regret and to mingle tears of genuine sorrow. A higher standard of living exists among us from his influence."

Mr. Coyle was richly endowed with many of the qualities which are universally recognized to be characteristic of genuine greatness. He was always a modest man, and he was never given to pushing himself forward, but rather the reverse. As usual in such cases, hosts of friends endeavored to give him prominence for the sake of the real power of leadership that was in him. He printed and used in his own Sunday-school a "Christian Catechism," as he called it, "On the Historical Plan." His name does not appear on the pamphlet; the title-page states simply that it is "by the Pastor." The little brochure is a fascinating picture of the stalwart method which he wrought out with such profound historical and philosophical insight in the Rand Lectures. It is a fine exhibition of the best spirit and method in the modern interpretation of Jesus.



A striking example of his modesty was shown in connection with a communion service at the close of the "Retreat" in Grinnell in 1894. Having been requested to administer the wine at that service, only with extreme reluctance did he do so, and then on the condition that he should make an explanation of his conception of his own unworthiness to do it. He said that he had been realizing profoundly during the Retreat days how sinfully proud he was, and it had humiliated him to such an extent that he shrank from even the little appearance of prominence which the choice of those present had thrust upon him in asking him to assume the position of spiritual teacher in connection with that service. "Why," said he, "I shall even be proud of this confession before I have done with it." It was almost pathetically humorous, but impressively sincere.

Another characteristic of him was that he was to a rare degree an ever-growing man. The doors of his spirit were always and in all directions open wide. So fresh air seemed about his thoughts and soul. There was another special fact in which this growth was very marked in the last half-dozen years of his life. His mind was naturally mathematical and metaphysical. The deftness with which his words in pulpit and in common utterances moved amid the profoundest philosophical terms made him seem sometimes too far ahead of those whom he sought to teach. It was undoubt-

edly in some cases a hindrance to the best effectiveness of his preaching. But in the later years he with conscious intent acquired a simpler, more direct and popular style. It seemed as if he were just getting ready to bring to bear his profound resources in perfectly apprehensible terms upon the actual problems of human society. This characteristic of a perpetual growth in him made him of course keenly alive to modern social movements in the church and out. The socializing and democratizing of industry commanded much of his time and strength in the latter years. He lived in the midst of an industrial community. He interested himself intelligently, sympathetically, and helpfully in the labor troubles that were all about him. He was fully sympathetic with both the employee and the employer. While sternly impatient of any cold-blooded indifference or tyranny, he was yet cordially appreciative of the honest endeavor of the employers for a better status. Nevertheless it is not improbable that his intensest sympathy went out toward the poor. They were his own class. He knew them well. It is impossible that any man, however humble, could feel that Mr. Coyle was attempting to patronize him. More than once his services were sought as arbitrator, capitalist and laborer having equal confidence in his spirit of entire fairness. One incident I recall. I was his guest for a day a few months before he died. We were driving in the afternoon out to a

neighboring factory settlement. A small strike was in progress, and a mill was shut down. Suddenly he pulled up his horse, saying, "Wait a moment; I must go in here and see the superintendent." When he came back, after a few moments, he was full of expressions of sympathy for the employer, who was in honest perplexity, wanting to do his duty, both by the owners and the men. A little farther on he drew up again and said, "Here is where one of the men lives, with a large family to support." He was gone a little longer there, and there were tears in his eyes when he came back. He said: "There is real poverty there, and they can hardly get enough to eat, but yet the man believes that they are making an honest fight for righteousness. He says he can stand it all right himself, but it is hard to ask the wife and bairns to suffer with him in the good cause." There seemed to be something very high about that, the calling to offer sympathy, not to the one party, but to both. Neither thought the less of that sympathy, because each knew it freely accorded to the other.

His presence always bore the air of the great character-factors of honesty, frankness, truthfulness, genuineness, reality. His was one of those transparent lives. We who knew him always felt that we were getting his actual and best thought even in the lightest conversation. There was never anything to conceal. We felt that nothing repel-

lent would be discovered if his body and spirit could have been made of glass. Every one who knew him enough to be to a little extent acquainted with him must have felt that there was unflinching courage in him. There were Spartan qualities in this courage which made him one to lean on. He could give himself wholly to a great cause, as indeed he did, — the cause of God and Truth and Right. He was one of the most unpurchasable of men. No subtle temptation of that sort, however indirect, could ever even touch him.

He was naturally of a conservative temperament. The way he clung to the old Athanasian creed was a marvel to men who did not understand this element of his nature. He was ever loyal to the old and the past: so true a soul could not be otherwise. At the same time he was one of the most radical and progressive of men, as indeed all genuine conservatism is. For that is not genuine conservatism which would drag along all the lumber of the past, but only that is righteously conservative which, rejecting what is worthless, builds therefore the more solidly because more compactly upon that which has already been achieved. In him there was a brilliant synthesis of conservatism and progressiveism. He knew well how to mass the results of history to hurl them against all barriers to the progress for the purpose of which this history had been wrought out.

The perfect freedom and unconventionality of

his thought and expression naturally caused him to be much misunderstood by the conventional and incompetent. This brought about much unkindly criticism and sometimes what seemed to be very unfraternal treatment by some of his brother ministers. But in most cases longer acquaintance removed any such hostilities. This was markedly true in North Adams. Let this letter from Rev. Francis H. Rowley, who now writes from Oak Park, Illinois, be a piece of typical testimony touching this point:—

. . . “I was for eight years the pastor of the North Adams Baptist Church, and for six years Mr. Coyle’s neighbor. The last three years of the six we came very close together in a friendship that was to me most helpful and inspiring. Mr. Coyle came to North Adams a man at least twenty-five years ahead of his time. Some hundreds of years, perhaps, ahead of many preachers, and in his views of Christian truth so far ahead of me at the time, that for some years I only followed afar off. Gradually I caught up. When once a man breaks with his systematic theology he is apt to move with some speed. . . .

“Nothing in Mr. Coyle’s character ever testified so strongly to his inherent nobility and greatness as his willingness to sacrifice present success and to go without men’s praise in his loyalty to what he conceived to be the truth. For years we all called him a heretic, said that he was destroying

men's faith in the Bible, and gave him scarcely a word of cheer. He saw the rest of us carrying often the crowd with us, winning the popular applause, while he kept on preaching to the more thoughtful, often conscious that many of his own congregation were greatly disturbed at his teachings, — but so true was he to the truth as he saw it that he dared to wait and trust the future to vindicate his course. That courage to bide his time, to wait for the coming years to bring his reward, to stem the tide of criticism and censure patiently, lovingly, bravely, assured that his cause was just and right — was one of the things in him that revealed his inmost character. He 'sought a city.' He seemed to say, 'It's all right; I can seem to be a pilgrim and a stranger among my brethren, if need be, for the city I seek hath foundations.' I can see now how he saw that Christianity's future among the more intelligent of his fellows depended upon the acceptance of the larger, more scientific views of Christian truth that he had found. Instead of driving men into infidelity, he has saved many a man from losing his faith altogether.

"This all men who knew him confessed, no matter how much they disagreed with him in theology, — that he lived the Christ-life. Always, everywhere, Christ was his Lord and Master. The spirit of Jesus possessed him. The man who startled many of us by his strange and apparently

heretical and dangerous teaching to-day, would be found to-morrow living Christ among the poor and suffering of his parish or the town. One old Irish woman said, at his funeral, 'In many a dark hour he was my only friend.' Scores of such cases might be found. He was a strong, original thinker, but his heart was overflowing with love and sympathy to all who were oppressed or unfortunate. Only a man whose faith was stayed on God could have walked so many years alone, doing his work and finding his reward, not in apparent success, but in spite of what men called failure, — in the assurance that he was doing the right. I never saw a man more willing to forfeit, if need be, the honor of his friends, or to incur the deep censure of his critics when he heard the voice of duty.

"I came not only to honor him with all my heart; but to love him as one of the noblest and best of men."

It is not to be wondered at that the Denver people sought him earnestly, if many such estimates as the above reached their committee. Concerning some of these Mr. Coyle wrote to Mr. Coy August 13, 1894: "Your letter which came this afternoon simply overwhelms me, and all I can do at present is to acknowledge its receipt. My friends seem to have loved me in rather hysterical fashion and said extravagant things about me. I shall spend the rest of my days trying to live up to their specifications."



The following letter is a beautiful testimony to the way Mr. Coyle bound friends to himself in the bonds of fellowship on high altitudes of life. It is from Rev. Preston Barr, a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Tacoma, Washington, a friend since college days. Let this word stand for that which many would, and indeed in varying forms do, testify: —

“I have lost the friend of my life who stood closest to me in intellectual and moral sympathy. No man whom I have ever known has possessed anything approaching to his power of stimulus in the domain of intellect and character. The moral ideal stood over his life like the noonday sun in brightness and power, not only filling his mental eye with the clear light and vision of truth, but also inspiring his life with the energy and warmth of a divine enthusiasm. This was the force that impelled him in his life of intense activity. The sphere of active duty and service was the very element and joy of his being. I cannot imagine him as thinking of duty in the light of self-sacrifice, but always as delightful and necessary self-gratification. Nor could I ever think of him as departing this life otherwise than at the post of duty in the thick of the fight.”

There was in him a very rich vein of humor. The whole man was broad awake. Few, indeed, were the people who could converse with him, but that his mind would run along ahead of the



speaker. His part in the conversation often contained, of course, with no rude intention on his part, a neater statement of his interlocutor's remarks or opinions than the original. I doubt if any one ever saw him appear to hesitate for an answer to an argument, or for a reply to an expressed or implied question. It almost seemed as if the answer had anticipated the question in his mind. He was an appreciative listener. His keen enjoyment of the bright and even humorous side of events made him one of the most genial of companions. It is hard to conceive that any one could experience a tiresome moment in his presence. He was abundantly endowed with vivacity and quick wit. There have been few men more capable of brilliant instantaneous repartee, even amid discussions of the profoundest themes and under most exacting circumstances. On several occasions when under "examination" in theological matters, sharp thrusts of questions were parried by wit keen enough to include complete answer, good natured enough to preclude the charge of irrelevant impertinence, fair and generous enough to win the case for him among the fair minded and the capable.

However sharply opposed or even attacked, there was no bitter retort, nor indeed evidence of the least unkindly feeling. He was one of the most remarkable men in this respect. There was a power in him to rise with utmost geniality of good

nature clean above easy retaliation even into the atmosphere of a sweet Christian spirit, and it was yet done so naturally and easily that it seemed to cost no effort, but just to be the nature of the man. For instance, here is a word from the last sermon he ever preached. There was some sharp difference of opinion raised at his installing council in Denver. While the majority were with him, one or two felt so strongly as to advocate disfellowshipping the First Congregational Church with its pastor. So much had been said and printed that Mr. Coyle very reluctantly gave this Sunday morning sermon, which he little thought would be his last on earth, to some direct and personal statements concerning this council and its issues. In the midst of them occur these words:—

“The only criticism of me in print which is worthy of consideration is that of the honored pastor of the —— church, whom I love, and with whom I have some earnest and unusual agreement. I agree with him, as I know many of you do not, that doctrine is a matter of great importance, and that the maintenance of the truth is not too dearly paid for by the temporary suspension of fellowship. He represents the strength of the small minority that stood against me in the council. By no fault of his, his opinion, rather than that of the majority, was telegraphed East, where my friends and yours have no other means of information. My friends, as already I have evidence, do not believe it; but yours are more likely to.

“I have no occasion to say a word against the action of the pastor of the —— church. He has done not only what he had a right to do, but what from his point of view was his plain duty, and he has done it in a sweet and manly Christian way. Our personal friendship will not be interrupted for a moment by it. I do not expect he will ever believe I am quite right, but I do confidently wait the time when he will admit that I am not outside the limits of tolerance.”

I shall venture to make room for generous quotation from this remarkable utterance, in which the self-revelation of some of the best things in the man comes out in clear light.

Since expressing the above judgment, I am glad to find it shared by another, Rev. Dr. John H. Denison, of Williamstown, Massachusetts, who in a letter to a friend says:—

“I have just been reading with great interest and delight Mr. Coyle’s last sermon as reported in the North Adams paper. It seems to me a noble Christian utterance, based on broad scholarship, and profoundly true and prophetic. . . .

“I rejoice that God led him to make that last clear and ringing testimony. It is precious as his heart’s blood, and almost moves me to tears. It will stand as the epitome of his life. All else that he said or did is insignificant compared with this last. It is not the detail but the outcome that the world is concerned with.”

To continue the quotation from the sermon:—

“Two things I ask you to believe of me: that I do not seek notoriety, and that I shall not attempt in a destructive spirit to pull down the established order. The notoriety hunters will not follow me long. I have no use for that kind of constituency. I can do it no good, and have neither the disposition nor the ability to amuse. As to the social order, I will support it, — not as a slave or a parasite, but as an independent member of it, conscious of earning all I get from it, and with a stake in its stability on behalf of my loved ones. I shall not cease to seek to reform it. My criticism of it will be free, but neither acrimonious nor unsympathetic. I am ready now, as until now I was not, to build my life into this church and this city. How many persons I may have alienated I do not know. But I have taken little comfort in my popularity, because I knew that the crisis would surely some day come. I am glad it is over. My ambition is to remain and see a generation of children grow up under my pastoral oversight. These children must respect me, my character, my intelligence, and my courage. Had I been a coward to avoid unpopularity, though no one knew it but myself, it would have so affected my bearing that the divine instinct of the boy would have detected something despicable, and I could never have been to your boys the pastor I have an ambition to be.

“Now I have done with this. I do not expect to be understood at present. The most painful thing to me has been the necessity for trying to hasten an understanding; and that has been for your sakes and not for my own.

“We pass now to a subject concerning which I speak without the least reluctance — my beliefs. I have beliefs in which I so rejoice that the thought of them fairly makes me bound from the floor; and I am consumed with impatience until I can impart the same joy of faith to you. These beliefs are neither heretical nor eccentric. There are elements of originality in them, as in the beliefs of all thinking men, but neither in substance nor in form do they differ greatly from those of a large and growing body of ministers in all denominations. . . .

“I will only speak of the two of his charges which are pivotal. He is mistaken in thinking that I do not sufficiently exalt the Scripture. On the contrary, my doctrine of the Scripture does it more honor than the current one. I hold in substance to the Lutheran doctrine cast in modern mould, and which compares with the current view as life compares with mechanism. Of this, however, I will say no more at present.” . . .

At another time he spoke thus on the same subject:—

“Instead of ‘infallible rule of faith and practice,’ let us substitute ‘inexhaustible source of

spiritual truth and power.' The first is passive and rabbinical, belonging to the terminology of the scribes, who always slew the prophets or men of power. The second is active and dynamical. . . . If charges of heresy upon the doctrine of Scripture are afloat and must lodge somewhere, let them lodge where they belong, upon those who give to the Bible the equivalent of divine honor, which it ought not to have, and empty it of the divine power which it possesses, saying, 'Touch it not lest ye die,' when its virtue is in its touch."

Mr. Coyle's last sermon continues : —

"We come now to the point about which I am so glad to speak that the opportunity to do so repays me for the pain of the occasion, — the Godhead of Jesus. I should have preached upon that to-day in any case. Those who accuse me of denying the deity of Jesus forget to reckon that there may be more than two possible attitudes, namely, that which they occupy, and that which they imagine to be mine. I respect both of these positions. They were both occupied to good advantage in their day. But I do not and never did or could hold the one they think I do. It was out of date before my day. When I awoke from 'dogmatic slumber' I was fortunate enough to awake in thoroughly modern atmosphere. I call you to witness that I have preached the deity of Jesus incessantly since I have been among you, and that I have scarcely announced a hymn that was not an ascrip-

tion to him. The deification of Jesus is not a theorem to be maintained; it is a fact of contemporary history to account for and to adjust one's self to, that Jesus is *de facto* God. He is enthroned at the right hand of the Supreme Majesty, and you can no more talk him up or down than you can talk the sun into or out of the firmament. I shall not go out of my way to prove the divinity of Jesus to any one. Whoever desires it I will leave to the logic of events. Neither am I afraid that any one will dethrone Jesus by investigating him. I would as soon think of the geologist demolishing Pike's Peak with his hammer. I have myself an absorbing interest in making as complete a study as possible of the nature of that divinity, and of the course of history by which the Son of Mary was enthroned beside the Ineffable; and since I was born with the hunger, not only to receive, but to impart knowledge, I count myself among the most favored of men, because I have the opportunity, with sufficient leisure and unlimited freedom, not only to pursue, but to help others to pursue this wholesome, this saving truth. I am firmly convinced that nothing can make this beautiful city of Denver a city of God but a more universal and genuine knowledge of Jesus.

"Loyalty to him is poverty stricken in its expression for want of adequate and real knowledge concerning him. Hortatory discourse about him



has a frequent falsetto ring because it does not spring from or is not addressed to sufficient knowledge. Of so much importance do I deem it that this city know Jesus as a basis for the solution of the issues of its life, that I shall turn to discuss current questions only occasionally and incidentally, as by way of paying my tax as a citizen for current expenses. These things, however, for the most part I shall leave for those who have not been called, as I think I have, to the high mission of interpreting Jesus. As soon as I have time to resume and complete the special preparation which was interrupted by my removal to Denver, I propose to begin to speak systematically and exhaustively upon the life and person of Jesus. There is nothing else to preach about to-day. There is no question any longer of the divinity of Jesus. The philosophical revolution of the last quarter century has brought it about that what question there is is about the divinity of God. The days of deism are gone ; and those of philosophical theism, except as it crowns the worship of Jesus, are numbered. No man hath at any time seen a God worthy of worship ; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed Him. The curricula of our theological schools which are arranged with a view to making men believe in God the first year, and in Christ the second, will have to be set to grind the other way. The name of Jesus everywhere commands homage. Those



who imagine they worship nothing actually worship that name. The world idolizes Jesus. For once it has an idol the worship of which does not degrade or lead astray. The great discovery of this age is not electricity. It is Jesus. 'This recovery of the historical Christ,' as Dr. Fairbairn calls it, is the last and ripe fruit of the Renaissance. It could not happen until the new historical sense had developed a critical method and tested and perfected it in other departments. The first firm and constructive use of that method was by Niebuhr in his history of Rome. It is only now beginning to be employed for the recovery of Hebrew and early Christian history, but already it is yielding results richer than can be computed. We can never think again as we did, any more than we can travel with ox-carts. We are in the age of the spirit, and the spirit is life and action. The next score of years is to witness such an increase of knowledge concerning Jesus as will fitly crown the discoveries of the last score in material science. It is a glorious thing to be alive to-day — and the knowledge of him is life."

These last preached words of our beloved seem sent back to us by him, a clear beckoning testimony from that life upon which he has entered, the life whose richest part is larger "Knowledge of Him."

GEORGE A. GATES.



# THE IMPERIAL CHRIST.

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## I.

### THE FIRST CHRISTIAN DUTY.

#### AN ADVENT SERMON.

The Lord is at hand.—PHIL. iv. 5.

Behold I stand at the door and knock.—REV. iii. 20.

TO-DAY stands in the calendar of the Christian year as the first Sunday in Advent. That calendar, older than the divisions of Protestantism, older than Protestantism itself, older than the schism between Rome and Constantinople, belongs to all Christendom, which, dating its era from him, ought to divide its year also with reference to Jesus, who has been exalted to the right hand of Him who sits upon the circle of the heavens and rules the seasons. It is therefore rightly called not so much an ecclesiastical as a Christian calendar, as this is the Christian era. Between the church, as representing ecclesiastical dogmas and systems, and the personal empire of Jesus Christ the distinction must sometimes be emphasized.

Facts indeed compel attention to it. A German student recently hired himself to work in a factory, that he might learn the secret of that social democracy which is so widespread among the workingmen of Germany. He reported that more universal and more significant than the political ideas and aims of these men were two things: a profound disbelief in the church and in Christianity, as represented by the church, and a profound faith in Jesus and admiration amounting to adoration of him, as the head man of the race. And this same thing is to a lesser extent coming to pass among us; and at least it is not the worst that could happen, for the only thing which has become so identified with us as to be essential to the coming of the kingdom of God and man in this world is the personality of Jesus of Nazareth. Let all else go, so that men's minds continue to revolve with the years about Jesus, and the empire of redemption will move on apace.

We hear of the secularization of Christmas. God hasten the secularization of the whole year in similar fashion! It is the substitution of a genuine for a false sanctity; of sacredness for sacerdotalism. When it has completed itself, we shall see the new Jerusalem come down from God out of heaven. The world has begun to look to Jesus, to seek to embody his spirit once a year, at the anniversary of his birth. But let it follow him through the year. Let it listen to the Sermon on the Mount.

Let it stand with him at Bethsaida. Let it go out with him to Cesarea Philippi. Let it march behind him up the gorge from Jericho to Jerusalem amazed and silent, saying, "Let us go that we may die with him." Let it witness his simple yet eloquent triumphal progress mingled with tears over the sinful, the apostate city. Let it sit down at the memorial supper. Let it watch with him in Gethsemane. Let it see the traitor's kiss. Let it follow into the hall of Caiaphas, and stand with the crowd outside the tribunal of Pilate. Let it travel the *Via Dolorosa*, and stand by the cross and hear the prayer, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Let it view the empty tomb, and celebrate the Easter gladness over him whose relation to the world, whatever it may be, has transcended that of a mere posthumous influence. Let the breath of spring come to it with pentecostal grace, and the vision of a Triune Glory open to it as the scales fall from its eyes; and then let it ripen through the rest of the year as through the summer which this sun of righteousness has brought, and by the time it has waked up to the anticipation of another Christmas season will it not also, if it has improved its opportunity, find for that new Christmas a new meaning?

It should be the effort of us all to pursue some such course as this, to seek to learn of Jesus in the spirit of Jesus himself, to strip away such over-

growths of pious but often discredited opinion as have concealed him. Each year we should seek to come around to the starting-place with some new treasure. And this is about the starting-place. Here we begin to prepare for the Christmas season. The distinctive characteristic of this season is that it has come within the sphere of influence of Christmas. As the old almanac would say, "At about this time begin to look out for Christmas gifts." And children and elders alike are prompt to take the advice. Find out what is uppermost in any child's mind, and it is probably Christmas. Learn what parents are thinking of, and it is probably how to make the most of Christmas. The shop counters are already beginning to groan and the clerks to groan with them. If Birnam Wood be not come to Dunsinane, the young green forests have already for weeks been traveling in procession through our street on their way to city homes. Christmas is not far off; and the new year begins with Christmas.

But this coming Christmas cannot be last year's Christmas. It is the Confucian, not the Christian, era, whose years are circles. The years of Jesus are spiral curves like the whorls of a climbing millennium plant. His is the era, not of machinery, but of life. We do not come around to where we started from. A year with Jesus cannot leave us where it found us. And it is to this fact that this season ought especially to compel attention. This

Advent season, therefore, has a double anticipation. It anticipates both the coming again of the Christmas season and the fulfillment of that phase of which last Christmas was the beginning. Among the early disciples of Jesus, I think it was this latter anticipation which was most active. They lived continually under the sense of an incomplete era. Something was impending which was sure to happen some day, and might happen any day. This expectation they had from plain intimations of Jesus, whose own superb faith in his personal relationship to the world took the form of an anticipation of a second appearance. And this second appearance of Jesus was seen, both by himself and by them, to be a logical consequence of the place which he had won in their hearts, and was winning in the world. Each year as they rehearsed at length the events of his life and death and resurrection, and the descent of his spirit, and the starting in its power of his redemptive movement, they realized more and more that something was wanting to complete the cycle, so that their anticipation of the recurrence of the anniversary of his birth was swallowed up in the larger anticipation of his return in glory. And this season, therefore, became not so much the herald of Christmas as the herald of the second coming of the Christ, the second Christmas. This expectation has always held captive the minds of those who have fixed their loyalty to Jesus. The immeas-

urable possibilities of the movement which he launched, compared with its actual visible achievement, have made men feel that somewhere must be forming a reservoir of spiritual force which may at any moment revolutionize the world. The officials of the United States Geological Survey declare that the Wasatch Mountain range, which overhangs Salt Lake City, is gradually rising, and that the movement is registered, in its relation to the valley of the Great Salt Lake, by a series of earthquakes which occur when the strain at any place becomes too great to endure longer, and a fracture of the rock occurs, forming long precipitous "faults" which are only gradually obliterated by climatic influences. And they have warned the people of Salt Lake City that they are living on the spot where the next earthquake is now already overdue, so that they need not be surprised at a terrible convulsion which, when it does come, will come without an instant's warning. And the longer it is delayed the more awful it will be, and the more sudden. It may not occur in five hundred years, but it may occur to-day; and no argument for continued delay can be made from past delay. This is the prediction, not of charlatans, but of plain matter of fact scientific students, who are experts in this department of knowledge.

Speaking as one whom circumstances and special pursuits have made something of an expert in



the science of spiritual movements and potencies, I here declare that a similar movement has been going on, until so much amassed Christ-energy is in existence, in a form capable of instantaneous transformation from potential to actual, that, scientifically speaking, there is enough tension to produce such a moral and spiritual convulsion between now and Christmas as history has never seen, though poets and prophets have always dreamed of it. Neither is any improbability to be argued from the fact that it has not come before. It is certain to happen some time, and the longer it is delayed the greater becomes the strain, and hence the more likely it is to be of sudden and unexpected occurrence. I reiterate it, — speaking as a scientific student on the basis of a knowledge of contemporary history, and not as a fanatic or an ignorant twister of texts, — that this is to be expected. And I invite attention to the fact that within the past few years this same thing has received more frequent utterance from the mouths of sober and weighty witnesses than in all recent times. It is not long since Dr. Dale, of Birmingham, one of the leading ministers and public men of England, said that he felt assured that “there would shortly be such a display of the Saviour’s power through the church upon the world outside as had not been seen since the day of Pentecost.” The new heavens and the new earth may come convulsively and at once, and the Lord descend

from heaven with a shout. And the next Christmas may see it. God hasten it in his day!

Did I say, God hasten his day? Who are ye that desire the day of the Lord? Who am I that desire it? "The day of the Lord shall be darkness and not light." Ah, it is a great and terrible day when the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood. It will be a day of judgment and heart searching. It will be a day of decision, instant decision, with no more time for procrastination. It is not for me to threaten, but it is my duty to warn solemnly that this impending Christ-crisis is one which, when it comes, is to be dreaded as well as hoped for. The truth is that Jesus is not only the world's Saviour, but we believe that he is to be its Judge. We forget that in these days; we forget that the Christ-movement is one which concerns men as free moral agents, responsible for what they do, and the choices which they make or neglect to make. Though the dignity of manhood has been vindicated through the deification of a man, through the revelation of the divine sonship of humanity, we forget that with this dignity comes the possibility of irretrievable ruin as well as of eternal salvation and success. Such a possibility is inseparable from the new idea of the worth of manhood. The dogma of universal salvation is the counterpart, as it was the outgrowth, of the old hyper-Calvinism, which affirmed that God, out of his eternal purpose and

for the mere good pleasure of his will, chose some to everlasting life, and passed by others, thus dooming them to death. As against this the early Universalists not unaptly declared that, if the question of salvation was determined solely by the will of God, then it was incredible that any should be lost. That is so, and if we were shut up to that alternative we must be Universalists. But not being so shut up, we say that God is determined because of his love to save all men ; but we cannot say that God *can* save all men. We are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be when we have worked out our destiny in either good or ill. The possibility of eternal success involves that of awful failure. The issue, therefore, concerning the Christ-crisis is one of eternal life and eternal death. We must not belittle it. It is a crisis.

But as we are accustomed to say that society is the individual writ large, so this crisis is equally for the individual and for society ; and though the social crisis may not come this year, the individual crisis may come to many, and will almost certainly come to some. And since I cannot speak at length of both, it is to the individual Christ-crisis I wish to call especial attention this morning. Every year is a critical year. And precisely the same crisis is never twice repeated. Since last Christmas a new issue has been preparing for each of us to meet. I have chosen these two texts because

they together cover the ground, both as to the fact and the manner of the fact, of Jesus' relation to most of us. He is at hand, he is confronting us. And within the year he has been drawing nearer and nearer to many. They cannot begin another Christmas in anything like the same attitude with regard to him as that of last Christmas. His voice has become more audible. His claims upon them have become more urgent, his right to them has become more plain. The excuses which formerly expressed their unwillingness to admit him to their hearts have ceased to satisfy their consciences; the intellectual obstacles and skepticisms have either been removed, or have shrunk in importance; and their need of him has been revealed to them more than before. They can see more plainly than ever before how much better off they would have been had they yielded to him a year ago. They see how evil habit has been growing and gaining hold upon them, how the world has encroached upon them; how much easier it is to put sacred things out of mind than it was a year ago; how much more difficult to compel their attention to the things of Christ. As they look back, too, they see that probably never so often before in their lives have they resisted the spirit of Jesus as during the past year; never so often and so strongly have they held on to self against him. And so they have been subjected to a strain which either gradually or suddenly is to place them in a new relation to him.

This pressure of Jesus upon them is all the more irresistible in the long run because it is the pressure of love. Jesus comes to them with the importunity and the respectfulness of love. He does not force himself into their lives against their wills. He knows, and they know the moment that they come to consider it, that into their lives he must come, if they are to be redeemed; that the whole sum of redeeming agency in the world has come to be represented by him; that to shut him and that spirit which proceeds from him out of their lives is to shut out salvation, to empty life of all sacredness and prepare a vacuum which shall invite all evil. But he comes pleading to be admitted. The idea of soliciting love in the relation of Jehovah to Israel took hold of the prophets very early. It was a very remarkable idea for their age, a great stroke of originality. They dwelt upon the thought of a God who loved his people so tenderly and generously that he could not do violence to their own free choice, and hence he plead with them for the privilege of blessing them. The early disciples, remembering the gentleness of Jesus and the manner in which his love had won its way into their own hearts, conceived of him as succeeding to this characteristic of the Jehovah of the prophets, and knocking at the door of all hearts. Thus the prime characteristic of that Christ-spirit, of which they were the first channels, was its pleading love. It won men. Those

who were dominated by the spirit were dominated by love. The literature of the spirit was surcharged with love. The hymns and ritual of the church were redolent of divine love. The atmosphere of the meetings of the early Christians was an atmosphere of a love so divine that it simply puzzled their contemporaries. When the time came for them to bear testimony with their blood, the marvel of the world was how a poor crucified peasant could have so won the love of strong men and weak women that they would die for him. So love became a potency again in the world's history, and pure love has been one of the chief history-makers ever since.

Consider how much of your own life during the past year has been love-life; how much of what you have done has been won from you by love, — the love you bear to others, the love they bear to you, the love they bear to one another. Take an inventory of your possessions, of all that is of value to you, and eliminate from all these values that which love has in one way or other put into them. How much of them would be left? Value, we all know, is subjective in its determination. And the most important, the fundamental subjectivity which gives value to things, which makes the values we all so much cherish, is love. And all this love, when once we come to analyze it, to find the secret of it, — all this is owing to Jesus, not only as having originated with him nearly two

thousand years ago, but because the person of Jesus stands related to it daily.

Therein lies the significance of the declaration with which the early apostles founded the kingdom of Jesus, — that his relation to that kingdom transcends that of a posthumous influence. As the theologians would say, he is not only a first cause, but also an immanent cause. Wherever in the course of history the personality of Jesus has been lost sight of, the love which he brought into life has been presently lost out of it again. We may call it mysterious, and try either to believe it or to disbelieve it because it is mysterious, according to our preconceptions; but it is a fact of history that, wherever loyalty to Jesus cherishes him as though he were a present living person, there love enriches life; and wherever it fails to do this, these riches take to themselves wings. In this historical fact is justified to us that instinctive feeling of the child and of the child-side of man, that the love of Jesus is soliciting us all the while, as truly as it yearned over and won the hearts of his first disciples. All this transcendent part which love plays in life is the way in which the Master solicits permission to come into our lives. And during the past year this solicitation has gone on more and more with us all. Many have yielded, and have said that this source, this immanent present cause of all that makes life sweet, shall no longer be compelled to pour his blessings into their lives



from outside themselves, but that he shall come in and occupy the throne which he deserves to occupy. Others have held him off, cherishing and enjoying the blessedness of life of which he is the creator, bathing deep in the fountains of pure affection, but postponing the day when the source of all pure affection shall be within them.

And now another Christmas is drawing near, and we are again to join in the celebration of the birth of Jesus, for we all go as far as that; that fact is the meaning of the secularization of Christmas. But we know that Jesus was born a King. The whole course of events which gave the world a Jewish Messiah was working toward a royal personage. He would not have been equal to the causes which produced him had he not been a King. If we celebrate his birth, we celebrate the birth of a King — of our King. This King grew to be a man, and as a man he has asked and is asking our loyalty and our love. If I celebrate his birth, how can I refuse to enthrone his manhood? Let me think of this. It is less than a month until that season which all the world, myself included, has agreed to celebrate as sacred. If I, knowing his claims as distinctly as I do know them, hearing the pleadings of his love as I hear them, presume to go on and again celebrate his birth, does not my action, if this is all of it, partake somewhat of a mockery? Had I better not be frank like Herod, and send out and slay the



child Jesus, if I propose to pass through that season again without admitting the man Jesus to rule over me? It is a serious question, this, how we who are still shutting Jesus out of our hearts are to approach this Christmas season. That it is a holy season the world has agreed; that he who treads its courts should do so with clean feet, with innocent heart, with pure purpose, is a fair corollary. How can I, who for a year have been consciously and purposely putting off the day when Jesus shall be let into my heart to rule there, — how can I without inconsistency so much as buy a toy for my child in the name of Christmas? I glory in the so-called secularization of Christmas, because, when the world keeps Christmas, it acknowledges the kingship of Jesus, it follows the star of Bethlehem, it puts itself where at length it can be brought to face the issue of the enthronement of Jesus in its heart. I am glad that you kept Christmas last year, because you therein confessed that Jesus was born King. But meanwhile you have seen him become a man, assume the authority of a King, rise in some sense at least, and ascend to the Father. You have felt the pleadings of his love, you have acknowledged that he ought to be enthroned in your life. Now I challenge you in his name: how dare you, until you have enthroned him, celebrate in any way another Christmas?

I do not ask you to hold my conception concerning Jesus, to affirm my dogma, or understand my

philosophy. It is of small importance that one be nominally orthodox. I only ask that you follow out the logic of your own attitude, that you so secularize the whole of your life, as you have secularized, by sanctifying, this part of it.

*Let us pray.*

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee ; grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

## II.

### THE EXPECTANCY OF FAITH.

#### AN ADVENT SERMON.

Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient ; stablish your hearts : for the coming of the Lord is at hand. — JAMES v. 7, 8.

But the end of all things is at hand : be ye therefore of sound mind, and be sober unto prayer : above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves ; for love covereth a multitude of sins : using hospitality one to another without murmuring : according as each hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God ; if any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God ; if any man ministereth, ministering as of the strength which God supplieth : that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, whose is the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen. — 1 PETER iv. 7-11.

THESE two pieces of writing, so similar in substance and in tone, were written by men of quite diverse temperaments and histories, concerning the event toward which the minds of all the early disciples of Jesus were firmly set. To this expectation they had come by good right as his disciples ; for he had himself never wavered in his belief that he was about to stand to the world in a

relationship in which no other man had ever stood, or could ever stand after him. It is a remarkable fact that, in spite of his strong conviction on this point, he was under no illusions as to his ignorance concerning the when or the how of its coming to pass. He made no pretension in that direction. Predictions founded upon insight into his own character and his relations to God and men he could make. Predictions dependent upon foreknowledge of the accidents of history and of human caprice he was too sane to undertake. These things, he said, belonged to the Inscrutable Father. Yet while he could not foretell times or seasons, he encouraged his followers to watch for the signs of the new era, intimating that he who could observe the operations and learn the laws of life and growth might anticipate that era, as he might anticipate summer by the blossoming of the fig-tree.

It is unnecessary to say to a congregation of thoughtful people in these days, that we are to look for the secret of this expectation of Jesus and his disciples concerning his future relation to the world, in his character, and in the relation to history in which he was believed by himself and them to stand. It was too vital a belief, and held too large a place in their scheme of life, to be dependent upon any mere tradition of words of his. The cardinal faiths of the first disciples were grounded less upon what he had said than upon what they knew

him to be. His words are recorded less for their own sake than to portray his character as it appeared to those who had been acquainted with him. Sometimes but the slightest foundation appears in his recorded sayings for their teachings concerning him, and yet the portrait they have drawn shows how these doctrines must have been inferred. Frequently his own sayings concerning himself have the marks of incidental and partial self-revelations of a profounder self-knowledge. Compared with what he has turned out to be, his claims for himself have an air of modesty and reserve. When he spoke he spoke truth ; but far more than that, he was the truth.

Now the expectation, both of Jesus himself and of his first disciples, that he should one day occupy to the world a distinctively new and vastly more vital relationship than anything then in sight, was an expectation based directly upon a perception by himself, and more dimly by them, of what sort of character he was, and what a pivotal position he held in human history. He had at the beginning of his public career measured himself against the world as he found it, and he knew then that either he was a failure, and such a failure as to discredit the whole course of history, whose occurrence in the universe was a disgrace to its God, or else the world must be revolutionized through him, and must accept him as henceforth its moral and historical centre. His faith in God and in himself,

as what he knew himself to be, left him no alternative but to predict such a revolution. As to his disciples, they knew that he had come into their lives, and had turned them so completely about, had made such new men of them, that he was henceforth literally more to them than the whole world, and they were compelled, upon the basis of their personal experience with him, to assert that in so far as the world had not yet experienced a like change, it must do so. To do less than to affirm this would seem to them to be infidelity to him. No disciple of Jesus who had any realization of the change which had come to his own life, and who was in healthy touch with the every-day life of the world, could fail to expect the world to be correspondingly changed. The only way in which to cherish the sense of personal experience of newness of life through Jesus, without expecting the world also to have a similar experience, is to regard one's self as living in a hopeless and hostile environment, from which he anticipates a speedy removal. When the church gave up the hope of any early conquest of the world by Jesus, vital piety was able to maintain itself only by the cultivation of a morbid longing for the things beyond death,—by other-worldliness. It was then that “being a Christian” came to mean being “prepared to die.”

It is true that the faith of Christ involves a confidence in the things beyond this life, and cannot continue to exist unless it has such a message

of hope. It involves this, however, not because of the hopelessness of the conquest of this world by Jesus, but because of the assurance that this world not only belongs by right to him, but shall actually be his. The hope for the unseen cannot possibly survive without a corresponding hope for the seen. If the known world is the devil's world, there are no data for any inference that the unknown world shall prove to be God's. Men say to us with force: "What use is it for you to preach blessedness in the next world, when this one is full of selfishness and injustice? We must gain our ideas of what we cannot see from what we can see." They are in the right. If I am to acquiesce in this world's continuing to be the scene of injustice and triumphant selfishness, I must throw up my brief for the hope beyond. If I am to contend with any prospect of success for that hope, I must give myself with sincere diligence to the betterment of all human relationships,—social, political, economical. People sometimes ask a minister to mind the affairs of religion, and let politics and business alone. It is just that kind of sticking to religion without reference to the establishment of right relationships between men which presently leaves one with no religion worth sticking to. True religion fulfills its mission when it creates a hope, or if need be a dread, of the permanence and culmination of present personal relationships. He, therefore, who would best serve its cause will try



to better these present relationships. A disciple or a preacher of Jesus may carry his religion into politics in a wise or in an unwise way, but he cannot stay out or keep it out. In all contentions for social betterment the day comes when he who tries to keep out plays as assuredly into the hands of one party or other as he could do if he went in. Vital piety founded upon hope for the things beyond will wear out or starve unless it reaffirm continually its hope for the things here. There is no enduring hope in Christ which does not imply, as one of its essential elements, the hope for the regeneration of this world. A religious faith founded upon the character and mission of Jesus cannot continue to exist without faith in a social reconstruction. I cannot believe in and look forward to my own salvation without believing in and looking forward to the salvation of society. A personal piety which acquiesces in social heathenism cannot be prevented from degenerating into hypocrisy and cant.

The feeling of this fact was a large part of the secret of the vigorous assertion of the early Christian disciples, that things must speedily come to a crisis; it was because they believed in God and in Jesus, and because, so believing, they could not conceive of things continuing as they were. The world could no more continue to be the same world it was than they could continue to be the same persons they were. Their own salvation



could not stop until it was complete ; and it could not be complete without the salvation of the world of which they were a part. And thus they looked forward with confidence to the redemption of the world.

It was only in obedience to the mental habits of their times that they looked for this change to come about through a physical miracle. It was natural for Paul to expect the world to be converted in much the same way in which he believed himself to have been. Yet we discover Paul, in one of his letters to the Thessalonians, beginning to calculate upon the basis of the normal development of social and religious and political forces. And even so unsophisticated a man as James, who was suspicious of all rationalizers, had caught the meaning of Jesus' simile of the blossoming fig, and understands that the coming of the kingdom depends upon processes of ripening. Hence he uses the metaphor of our text, "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it until it receive the early and the latter rain." Thus from so unexpected a quarter as that comes the suggestion that the world's regeneration is not to be a physical miracle, in any other sense than that in which all the processes of life may be regarded as miraculous. When we compare this state of mind with the contemporary superstitions, we are struck with its soundness. They expected the day of the

Lord, and they expected it soon. On the whole, however, this expectation was dominated by the thought that it would come to the world as it had come to them, less as a miracle than as the fruitage of a seed-sowing in which they were themselves busily engaged.

It should be particularly noted that this prevalence of the natural over the preternatural in their expectation did not dampen their enthusiasm or crowd the expectation off into the indefinite future. James referred to it in order to inculcate a reasonable patience, not by any means to justify a faithless indifference. He was none the less an eager believer in the speedy consummation of this event, although he expected it to conform to the laws of life. It was not the fault of the seed if it did not bring forth fruit speedily; and so, while he would be patient, he affirms that the day seems to him to be at hand. It is much to be regretted that we so often fail to combine the reasonableness of the early Christians with their enthusiasm. Why should rational ideas act like wet blankets to our fervor? I know a man of the broadest and soundest culture, an economist of international reputation, and not of the sentimental order, who confided to me that he had secured a copy of Lieutenant Totten's book on the approaching millennium. As I smiled derisively, he said, "I know it is absurd, but there is warmth of conviction in it; and I, who expect something just as

great to happen through the operation of social forces, can enjoy his earnestness, and feel the fire of his enthusiasm." I appreciate the position of this man. For myself, I am a stickler for the rational. I shall hardly trouble myself to read the lieutenant's book, and cannot blame Yale College for eliminating him from her list of instructors. Yet I cannot help wondering whether the attitude of the great seats of learning bearing the Christian name, my own alma mater among the rest, toward the question of the regeneration of society, is not quite as illogical in its absence of earnestness and enthusiasm. In calling themselves Christian, they profess to exalt Jesus and the spiritual force which he represents to a position which properly demands an expectation concerning his reconstruction of society; but this expectation they notoriously and illogically fail to have or to foster. The centres of nominally Christian culture which make the highest pretensions are rather indifferent to the hope of the Christianization of Christendom.

Hampton Institute, a school whose students are negroes and Indians, keeps five men in the field following up her alumni, and reporting what they are doing for the civilization of the races to which they belong, and for the hastening of the kingdom of Christ. She conceives that her mission is to equip men, not to succeed in the struggle for wealth, but to become leaders in the elevation of

their kind. A graduate is regarded as casting discredit upon his alma mater who fails to contribute something to bring in the millennium. Older and more famous schools ought to take a hint. I know of intellectual circles in Christian institutions where it is not good form to mention the millennium. In my college days the man who expected it was of the obscurantist type, afraid to read Spinoza or Hume or Stuart Mill, and thought the new era would be ushered in by a spectacular meteorological display, without the intervention or even the presence of moral causes. In the circles of those who had the temerity to read and think, the notion of a speedy coming of the rule of the Christ was tabooed. Can it be that they who call themselves representatives of the highest type of culture regard our present civilization as of the millennial order? Or are they so content with what they know to be second best, that they are hostile to the best? Yet charges of this kind against the culture of our times cannot be made to-day without much greater qualifications than were required ten or twenty years ago. Jesus has been, either by better knowledge of his person or by the conquests of his spirit, invading that sphere rapidly of late, and many minds of the most thorough training are to-day devoting themselves with fervent enthusiasm to the bringing in of his age. It is coming to be seen that there is something hollow and false about a culture which calls itself

Christian, and yet is blind to the fact that the character and the position of Jesus have in them a promise whose fulfillment must mean something revolutionary, and the postponement of whose fulfillment cannot be reckoned on. It should be more readily perceived by the cultured than by the ignorant, provided the culture has been genuine enough to bring them into perceptive relations to realities, that the issue of our day is that of the imminency of the coming of the Christ-force to rule in the world.

I have heard myself called an Adventist, — in contempt. I can endure that. I am an Adventist, not on the basis of a rabbinical interpretation of Daniel or Revelation, but on the basis of an untrammelled study of the character of the man whose birth is celebrated at Christmas, his passion during Lent, and his death on Good Friday; who rose on Easter, and ascended, and sent a new spiritual force of unmeasured possibilities to make an irruption into human history on Pentecost; who is finally, through his spirit, to seat himself on the world's thrones of power. I am an Adventist because, as I have remarked before, the years of the Christian era are not annular but spiral, not everlastingly revolving without progress. Each turn raises my expectation to a higher tension as the potentialities increase, until one of these days something will have to give way. I should be a faithless follower of Jesus, if with the knowlege

which has been granted me of his power, and of the position of advantage he occupies in the world, I did not look forward to every Advent season, not as a time to buy Christmas toys for grown-up infants to begin again the same trivial round, but as the time when the obstruction may give way, and the vast fund of Christian potentiality in the world become actuality. That thing is at any rate more probable each year than it ever was. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." I should belie my personal Christian profession, my general intelligence as a citizen of this age, my special culture as a student of Christianity, if I did not make the expectation of a speedy consummation of the conquest of the world by Jesus a good part of the motive power and the working machinery of my life.

We all remember how the charge was frequently reiterated, a few years ago, that, unless we could have a positive doctrine concerning the fate of those who die without the Gospel, the nerve of missions would be cut. A great missionary society was regarded as in danger because so many of its supporters refused to affirm concerning that thing. There was this much of truth in the charge: Christianity must have a faith concerning eschatology; that is, concerning the final outcome. Its nerve is cut if it has no faith in the final outcome. Now men generally do affirm less positively than they once did, concerning the destiny of the indi-

vidual. To fill the place of the discredited dogmas in that respect, it is necessary that we learn to see that there is a basis for a strong faith in the consummation of the Christ-campaign, with the moral and spiritual crises which will inevitably come along with it. Here, too, we have a better basis for convictions, for it brings our doctrine out of the unseen into the visible world, where scientific evidence may be attainable. I may not say with full certainty that I know what becomes of the man who has not heard of the Christ. I can say with much assurance that I do know what will become of the nation which does not hear and obey the word of Christ. The day is coming rapidly when all the nations and civilizations in the world, both those that are and those that are not called Christian, will be brought to face the issue whether they are in harmony with the law of Christ or not.

This consummation needs no physical miracle. I, for one, should be surprised and incredulous, I trust not too stubbornly incredulous, yet more incredulous than I can find words to say, if a physical miracle seemed to happen. But things have come to the pass when all that which is logically involved in the character and position of Jesus can occur without any miracle. The wizards of invention and applied physical science have performed all the nature-miracles needed. The only thing needed now is that miracle of grace which shall



bring a fair proportion of the professed followers of Jesus up to the logic of their own pretensions. James was right in exhorting to patience, so long as the fulfillment seemed to be in God's hands and the times were not ripe. But the right to judge when the times were not ripe implies the right to judge when they are ripe. It is now a fair judgment that God has passed the power over into our hands, and is waiting for us to strike the decisive blow. And since every moment of delay adds to the sum of human misery and guilt, which must be washed out in innocent blood, we incur a heavy responsibility if, because we would rather live in the world as it is than in the world as Jesus would have it, we decline to do our share, to strike our blow, to take up, if need be, our cross to bring on the end.

We anticipated a little while ago the truth suggested by the text from Peter, that the closest of relationships exists between vital personal piety and faith in the speedy establishment of the Christ-rule on earth. It is a subtle form of moral infidelity which pushes that crisis off into the indefinite future, and it may involve moral wreck. They are called "mockers" who say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For from the day the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." It is insinuated that their secret motive for so disbelieving is that they are walking after their own lik-



ings, which would put them out of sympathy with that reign. It would appear, therefore, that the apostle thought that not only vital piety but sound morality would suffer if the disciples of Jesus were content to live in an unregenerate society, and to wait until they died and could not help going to heaven. Can you or I be either pious or moral in the best sense if we do not believe with some warmth of conviction that our city as a whole, as a social, a political, an economic unit, ought to be and can be made at least as pious and moral as we are? Or will our piety become unctuous cant, and our morality pharisaic prudentialism?

From his faith in the nearness of the consummation St. Peter makes several important practical inferences. The first is that we should be of sound mind. It is not true that the belief in the coming of the Christ, in the regeneration of the world, in the Advent, is an inseparable companion of fanaticism and of misdirected intellectual effort. It is the sin of cultured and level-headed Christians that that error should be permitted to have a show of support in the facts. Not only is such belief consistent with the highest grade of intelligence; it should lead to the soundest exercise of discretion. Who will dare to be an intellectual sloven in the face of such an impending crisis? Who will continue to fondle his pet notions on all kinds of questions without asking about their pedigree, if he is persuaded that the great revolution is at

hand? Shall we drift on to it without taking soundings or determining our latitude and longitude? How many of the opinions uttered in private and in public, by voice and in print, on all manner of topics, are serious and founded upon data? How many are borrowed slipshod whims or prejudices? Let us look at the lot of views we hold on all subjects, from the currency to domestic service, and ask whether, if we were to see the heavens light up, and the Son of Man coming in the clouds to rule henceforth in human affairs, we should be ready to marshal them before him. Why, half of them are half infidel, unworthy of those who have the faith he had, and faith in him. We should be ashamed of them in his presence, and we only hold them because we have no vivid anticipation of ever being likely to have to account to him for them. It is high time that we, whose religion is vain unless we expect to account for our opinions to him, begin to emancipate ourselves from mean slavery to fashionable prejudices and whims of belief, and look squarely at facts, and think as is worthy of those whose God is the divine Logos, the Reason of things.

I do not know what Congress is going to do ; I do not pretend to know what it ought to do ; nor do I think it is making the effort it should to know, itself. But if the men in it who call themselves followers of Jesus, and who represent Christian constituencies, believe as they should that the

impending fact with which, as congressmen, they have to do is not the next election but the coming of the Christ-age, they would settle down to the business of finding out what to do with vastly more seriousness and to more purpose. Nothing would be so illuminating or so stimulating to the better mental faculties. The reason we have not found a way out of our economic troubles long since is, not because there are not brains enough to make the discovery, or that men of brains are not nominally Christian men, but because they have not been sufficiently impressed with the nearness of the era of social and political and economic rejuvenation to throw upon them a sense of responsibility for the full use in the right direction of the brains they have.

Not only should we be stimulated to sound thinking, but, as Peter also suggests, we should be sobered unto prayer. We should not only seek all human wisdom, we should be so impressed with our lack of wisdom that we should feel the need of prayer for it. We often fail to pray because we are living such narrow and petty lives that we do not realize the great lacks we suffer. If men knew and believed more of all that impends, they would be constrained to go down upon their knees crying out for divine guardianship and assistance for the crises that are upon them. I do not know by what particular measures the new era is to be ushered in. Probably it is my sin that I have not found

it out. I am not sure that it may not have to come through some wild convulsion like that which brought liberty to France. But I believe there is enough sound sense in the world, and communicable to it in answer to prayer, so that if men who believe in Jesus could be persuaded that it is actually coming, they would find a way to avert the necessity for its coming through seas of blood. I am not at all sure but the young man or woman is here before me to-day who only needs the stimulus of the conviction of its nearness and certainty to become the person who may lead in the solution of the problem of ways and means ; and so I preach in large hope. It was the preaching of an obscure monk in the Italian mountains which fructified the mind of Savonarola, and so kindled a light which yet shines down the ages.

There is another still more important thing suggested by Peter, which a sense of the nearness of the day of Christ ought to bring out in us, his followers. Many hands have attempted to draw pictures of the end of the world, and they all agree in portraying it as the occasion for the bursting out of the restrained flames of lust and hatred, which had been pent up and held down by the restraints of social convention. Let a city or a ship, say these artists, be given up for lost, and every mad passion will break forth. This idea grows out of the common notion that cruelty and sensuality are the primary qualities of human

nature. We dispute it. Witness in contradiction the magnificent courage and self-restraint of the officers and seamen who went down with that British warship a year or two ago. We believe it is a part of the faith of Christ that not lust and hate, but purity and love are fundamental, and that hence the crisis of the end should bring these out with irresistible force.

Not long since, in a newspaper interview, Alexander Dumas, that most skillful portrayer of human nature in its strong features, speaking of the armaments of Europe, declared that the significant fact about them is that the men who compose these armies do not hate one another, and that the day is coming quickly when, through the operation of international labor organizations and other propagating agencies, the spirit of brotherhood will have become so general that they cannot be depended upon to fight at the word of command. While disavowing any religious belief, and speaking only as an observer, he says that soon the ruling fact in the world will be the love which men will bear to one another. A sympathetic strike in a great European army at a critical juncture would cause men to behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He can make in the earth, how He can make wars to cease unto the ends of the earth, breaking the bow and cutting the spear in sunder, and burning the chariot in the fire. Then men would know that love is God. It will

be exalted among the nations. It will be exalted in the earth. When that time has come, the empires of oppression will no longer be able to stand, and the day of the Christ will be here.

The apostle, speaking of those who already expected that day, legitimately turns the argument about the other way, and appeals to the nearness of the new age as an incentive above all things to the most fervent love. This ought to be an age of the fullest experience and expression of human affection, because it is an age of the deepest and widest expectation. Small-mindedness and self-seeking are inconsistent with an apprehension of the seriousness of the issues that are brewing. It is he who says, "The Lord delayeth his coming," who beats his man-servants and maid-servants, and makes himself an oppressor or defrauder or corrupter of his kind. He who has a sense of the nearness of the advent will administer all the power which has come into his hands as a steward of the manifold grace of God. He will exercise a charity that will cover the multitude of sins. He will speak, when he does speak, with responsibility as an oracle of God. He will minister as of the ability which God giveth. He will cease to think of his own things, but will seek the interests of others. Thus this truth of the speedy coming of the rule of the Christ, a truth logically involved in the attitude we hold to him as our Lord and Redeemer, will itself work the soundest revolution

in ourselves, purging us from prejudice and untruth and self-seeking, and bringing us out into a largeness and nobility of love and service. And as the hope of Israel was one of the chief causes in bringing her Messiah, so this expectation itself will work most effectively to the bringing in of the Christ-age, when in all things God will be glorified through Jesus, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

*Let us pray.*

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee: grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.



### III.

#### THE ORIGINS OF JESUS.

##### A CHRISTMAS SERMON.

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ. — MATT. i. 1.

If we are to put faith in the Scripture we ought to begin at the beginning. We have formed the habit of skipping to the eighteenth verse of this chapter. It would be finical to pretend that this is because of anything other than the dullness of a list of names. Yet significantly parallel with it is the fact that the Christian church has formed the habit of neglecting to consider the line of causes, the generations, the geneses of Jesus, and has made it a virtue to believe in him more because of occurrences in connection with him which seem not to belong to that line. Many a faith has been eclipsed because of the dogma of the unexplainableness of Jesus. That has been thrust first instead of coming after the book of generations, in which place it might receive a light that would remove some of its difficulties.

Things are known by their causes, their origins. Our mountains and valleys and plains, scarped cliffs and rounded gravel hills, are books of gen-



erations, most instructive to those who have the acuteness of perception, fertility of imagination, and strength of reason to construe them. The searcher for knowledge pores over the books of generations seeking the causes of things, and their causes, and theirs, until he exhausts himself, not them. The modern doctrine of knowledge holds a thing but half known, insecurely known, not quite practically known, until it has been known in its origin. To deny, therefore, the right to know Jesus in his origin is to cripple the knowledge of him, and to hinder somewhat the savingness of the faith which is founded upon that knowledge. The Jews were not more than half wrong who excused their skepticism concerning Jesus by the adage that "no good thing could come out of Nazareth." They misjudged the possibilities of Nazareth, but they were quite right in reasoning from the law of cause and effect; and no worse blunder has been made than the effort to exempt faith in Jesus from the obligation to regard that law. The author of this history of Jesus for Jewish readers was as truly inspired when he undertook to make for him a genealogical table, as when he told the story of his marvelous conception. It was because he and his readers instinctively felt that the Messiah must come of a legitimate line of ancestry, must have the promise and potency of heredity, and not be the freak of an irresponsible or capricious fate.

Nothing less could or should have satisfied the Jews. It was the form which the law of continuity took in their minds. It showed that they had an aversion to sudden and unprepared-for happenings. Under the bigotry and selfishness of their narrow notions of genealogy was concealed the sense of the fact that, if a messianic era came, it would grow out of the courses of history through which they had passed. The genealogy of Jesus must show to them that he is of the seed of Abraham, that he is great David's greater Son, that in the loins of his ancestors he has passed through the fruitful experiences of the Babylonian captivity. These nodal points in their history must all be represented in the genealogy. Hence the chronicler, choosing fourteen as a sacred round number, makes out fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the captivity, and fourteen from the captivity to Jesus.

It is useless to deny that it has an artificial look, and that the critics do not think much of it. But Paul did not write to Timothy that the Scriptures inform us on all points. What he said was that they make wise, — quite another thing. We may certainly gain more wisdom than knowledge from this table. We learn that, while the Jew expected miracles, he did not so expect them as to cause him to forget or neglect the divine forces which were working within his history, the operation of which, though they do not interrupt the process of causa-

tion, constitute the supreme marvel or miracle. And that idea of the Jew, that the forces which could bring the Messiah were within his history, was one which he carried over, so that it ruled largely in the minds of the writers of the New Testament, which is remarkable for the way in which it brings in the causes of things, and tries to avoid creating out of nothing. "How many loaves have ye?" "Fill ye the waterpots with water." "Roll ye away the stone," are hints of the sparingness of the miraculous. This furnishing of genealogy to Jesus is an illustration of the same disposition to bring all that is messianic out of the world, as well as to put it into the world. May it not be worth while to imitate the Scriptures in seeking first to find the intelligible side of him who came, not that he might confound the human mind, but that he might make all things clear to it in the divinest of lights?

The joy of Christmas is spoiled for many by the feeling that they cannot come into it with the childlike abandon they once did. Each year it becomes more truly the festival of childlikeness. Yet to the reflecting mind comes the query whether this childlikeness will bear aging, whether it stands for anything of cosmic validity, whether it is a radiance from the countenance of the Eternal. We smooth out the wrinkles, and spend the day like children. Will the wrinkles all smooth honestly away? Can we let out our energies

without reserve in childlikeness? How can we, unless we believe there is something fundamental about the child-nature, that we are really children, that by the child-spirit is the nature of the kingdom of the unseen to be judged? Christmas can be a festival of unembittered joy to the thoughtful person only as he can believe with a faith unbounded that as he sits benign, contemplating with sympathy the sports of his children, so one who is supreme superintends, and with benignant heart shares his joys and theirs.

Can he believe this? Or is Christmas but a tree without a root, with tinsel foliage and artificial fruit? If we are to have a true Christmas we must have a Christ, a being who interprets to us the disposition of the Eternal. Since Jesus alone can lay claim to attention in these days as a Christ, the question for all minds is whether he is a real Christ, whether he is such a being as to have a right to be accepted by us as the key to the character of the Inscrutable. At Christmas, of all seasons, we would know what warrant, if any, we have for a faith in our Father, in whom alone can childlikeness trust. Else all our joy is an illusion, leading to the development of greater possibilities of wretchedness. Of all ensnaring joys the most delusive grow out of the spirit of the child, should that child prove to be an eternal orphan. I raise these questions because I dare to, because I have to preach a gospel of the Father

God made known in the Christhood of Jesus. I would that this Christmas season might be a landmark in all our lives, because of a new conviction of that Fatherhood through a new vision of the Christhood of Jesus, pouring its thrilling light into every recess of our souls, and awakening from the remotest corners of our universe the angelic strain, "Glory to God." To this end I would that Jesus could be seen as nothing less than the Christ, the Son of the living God. Nothing short of this will satisfy me, because I am sure that nothing short of this will permanently satisfy the demands of your reflecting intelligence.

And it is because I seek thus to show Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Eternal, that I would lay large emphasis upon his genealogy; not upon this table, but upon that for which it stands representative, the genetic relationship of Jesus to all that which makes up human history. Because the question about God, whether he be a Father, or a fiend, or whether he have any interest at all in men, is a question which can be answered to the mind of the present age, not by that which makes invasion into history without being part of it, but by that which either is itself the supreme outcome of history, or which so gathers up into itself the potency of the past, that it is destined to determine all the future. The Christ, for good or ill, is he who so stands as the supreme representative of that which has been, that he is to rule that

which is to be. Whatever sort of person he is, such must our faith or our fear paint the Eternal. We preach that the Eternal is to be painted by faith in the image of Jesus; therefore, not because Jesus was without a genealogy, but because he has gathered up in himself the most perfect qualities of all the generations of men, we preach the Christhood of Jesus upon the basis of his genealogy rightly understood. What exceptional things are in him correspond to exceptional things in his antecedents. Jesus can be known in his causes as the Christ of God. The book of the generation of Jesus the Christ runs back into the most remarkable set of causes in all history. There need be nothing commonplace in him, for there is nothing commonplace in the causes that preceded him.

The author of this catalogue, however artificial it may be in detail, was not mistaken in choosing the principal turning-point of the history which brought Jesus into being. He seized firmly the fact that in the father of the Hebrew race a new era was begun by the entrance into active share in human affairs of a noble and generous hope, which manifested itself in a new and saving spirit. How long this hope may have been cherished, how long this spirit may have operated in narrow circles or in series of choice individuals, there is no means of knowing. Legend and the nature of the case point far back into the mists of antiquity. At

the point where the legendary passes into the historical in Hebrew life, it had become a power of more than individual significance. It had passed into a social movement, and seers could declare that they saw in it a promise of final conquest. In David's day it had passed from a social into a political force, and had brought the race to which it belonged to rank, for a little, among the great world powers. But world powers rise and fall. Such is their destiny. If the greatest achievement of this peculiar force would prove to be to make Israel a world power, it could never produce a Christ, for a Christ must be greater than any one of the world's great powers. It must show its ability to survive the decay and overthrow of the world power which it had itself created. Such proof it gave. Israel as a political entity was erased from the map of the world; and yet this social force which had made her such persisted and gathered strength not only in spite of but because of her fall. The Babylonian enslavement was thus, as the author of this first chapter of Matthew's Gospel surmises, one of the chief turning-points in the history of the causes which brought the Messiah. No great social movement is fit to succeed until it has been baptized with political defeat. The messianic cause, the cause of both God and man, has to suffer complete political failure. Not that such failure is to be its final portion, but that it is one of the phases



through which it must pass in coming to itself. And thus it was that the cause of Christhood was making progress toward the bringing in of the Christ. Jesus was not one who came at the end of a long course of history which had been a failure, and who set at naught all the causes which had been operating through it, and all the expectations it had been fitted to arouse. He came because of it, because Abraham was, and David was, and the captivity was; so Jesus was. He was the fruit of that long course of history.

If we do justice to this course of history, if we study aright these seventeen verses of genealogy, we may be able also to discover then that the spiritual influence which the Scriptures declare had so large a part to play in the coming of Jesus also belonged to the history out of which he came. That spirit was the same spirit which had been working in the prophets and patriarchs and poets of Israel from the first. It was the spirit of Abraham, of Moses, of David, of Saul, and Elijah and Isaiah. It was the spirit of Jehovah, the national god of Israel. It was acting within the nation in the form of the national spirit, the social force which controlled its destinies. It could be foreseen and foretold that, if ever the history of Israel achieved what it was fitted to achieve, the spirit of Jehovah, working as a social and a religious force, would be one of the principal factors in producing that result. I say that that spirit was a social as well



as a religious force, in witness of which see the song of Mary, the *Magnificat*, whose tone of hope of social revolution is quite as marked as that which is religious in it.

Thus beginning with the study of the genesis of Jesus in its more intelligible aspects, we shall discover that the less intelligible will have a new light shed upon them, which they do not possess when we come to them directly. It will appear that the birth of Jesus is less remarkable for anything which may not be human about it than because it is so uniquely normal in its humanity. He came out of a course of history more nearly normal than any the world had yet lived. No other civilization had succeeded in eliminating slavery from itself. No other had fastened so large a degree of individuality in harmony with so perfect and stable a social organism, had so steered between individualism and socialism, between despotism and anarchism. There never was so fine a balance of humanity in all its parts as in that course of history which gave birth to the Son of Man. When one contemplates that history, weighs its possibilities, and focuses together the many lights of its ideals, he can predict with some certainty that, if it ever fulfills itself, the result will be a typical man, a Christ man, one standing in a unique relation to mankind, exercising, or having a right to exercise, a unique sovereignty, to play a unique part in all human affairs, to be

the object of a unique regard, and, if he be morally worthy, of a unique worship, or if unworthy, of such a curse as no other being ever brought upon himself from the heart of man. Of such a being was Hebrew history pregnant, a being who should save the world by hope, or damn it by despair. It is an ignorant prejudice which many, who call themselves advanced, have against the Old Testament. The truly modern mind lays hold of the Old Testament with avidity, because it is the literature through which is learned the origins of the man who chiefly concerns men in this day.

I commend to you the book of the origins of Jesus. Whether our Christmas shall have a Christ in it, whether it shall continue to be to us as men and women the festival it was to us as children, must depend upon the result of our intelligent effort to understand Jesus in his character and antecedents. He himself asked of the Jews, "What think ye of the Christ? Whose son is he?" His criticism of their conviction that he was to be the Son of David was not because they held it, but because they held so little of the truth of it. I would preach at this Christmas season the need to the world of the faith in a Christ, the claim that Jesus is the Christ, and the demand for an intelligent faith, which indeed shall transcend but shall not despise knowledge, or neglect to have a knowledge to transcend. But I would

not preach the importance of the knowledge of Jesus simply for the gratification of curiosity, however noble the love of knowledge for its own sake may be. I would not encourage the effort to find that Jesus came out of history simply to meet the skepticism of those who demand it as the condition of their faith in him. But in most subtle ways the faith that Jesus can enter into history, that he can ramify into all of its parts, and recreate human character and human society in all of its fibres, is dependent upon the conviction that he came out of history. It is part of the gospel of the incarnation that in all points except sin he was made as we are ; and we are speedily made aware, when we attempt to set out on independent lines, that we are members of a race, conditioned by its circumstances and its history. If he is not also a part of the race, we cannot look with the same confidence to his finding out the needs and answering to the demands of the race.

Because Jesus came out of the race, no single formula can define him or act with his saving potency. Could a formula have saved men, a man ought not to have been sacrificed. It is because men have not sought to know and interpret Jesus in the light of the history that produced him that they have supposed that certain shibboleths carried with them all the saving force that there is in him. But no shibboleth can stand for Jesus ; Jesus cannot be known by a phrase ; he cannot

be preached by ringing the changes on any phrase. I say more, Jesus cannot be known or preached from the Gospels alone. Not only the apostles, who interpret him in the light of afterthought, but the ancient Scriptures, which betray the working up of the tension out of which he came, are needed. More even yet; all history, and all that which constitutes the physical basis of history, all the biological and physical sciences, are to yield up their data for such a knowledge of Jesus as shall make it possible fully to work him into the texture of modern life.

One of the arguments, and the most effective one, in favor of the study of classical antiquity is that antiquity has contributed so much in so many ways to modern life and the conditions which surround it, that he who would be in his element in life, and strike instinctively at the truest success in it, must be trained into intelligent sympathy with the life of the ancients. I would maintain on similar grounds that the knowledge in detail of the character and the origins of Jesus will be the only way so to bring men into intelligently sympathetic relations with the world of men, out of which he was born, and into which he has wrought himself, that they may live the Christ-life therein. One of the most urgent needs of the men of to-day is to know Jesus; not merely to know him in the metaphysical or mystic sense of the theologian or the pietist, not merely to be imbued with his spirit,

and thus know him by spiritual insight, but to know him by the same faculties by which they know other things ; to know him in the book of his origins, in the causes that produced and can reproduce him, in the men and women who lived the Christ-life in anticipation of the Christ-day.

## IV.

### THE TEMPTATION.

MATTHEW iv. 1-11.

THE fate of the world is always turning upon incidents. Side issues swallow up main issues, and then, having become themselves main issues, are in turn swallowed up by new side issues, and thus the stream of history makes its devious way. The partial awakening of the Jewish people to a consciousness of their supreme duty and opportunity under the preaching of John the Baptist incidentally waked up the self-consciousness of Jesus of Nazareth, and henceforth he, rather than the nation, becomes of prime interest. Heeding the voice of one whom he saw to be a true prophet, doing what seemed to him to be the duty of a loyal Jew, preparing to play whatever part might be assigned him in the coming crisis of the kingdom, and already suspecting that he was to be the chief instrument through whom the kingdom of God was to come, he had, in the performance of that simple and apparently artificial duty of submitting to baptism, suddenly arrived at the most startling conviction as to who he was.

Heretofore, though he may have pondered the problem whether he was not the Messiah, it need not have led him to think about his own greatness or littleness. He may easily have been content with the common Jewish notion that the coming of this kingdom was to be an event purely miraculous, and that the messianic instrument was to be a mere tool in the hands of divine power. In accordance with this idea, he could wait in unreflecting humility and patience, cherishing the sublime and comforting consciousness of divine fatherhood, but omitting to draw from it any adequate inferences concerning his own sonship, and what sonship meant in his case. But the baptismal principle of the great prophet was that each man should take upon himself personal responsibility for his share in the coming event, — the sinful by repenting, and those who needed no repentance by setting their faces toward the bringing in of the kingdom in whatever way they were able. The story was that Jesus was the only candidate that came who did not strike the prophet as needing repentance ; and so absorbed had that preacher been with the fact that turning from sin was the main thing, that he was unwilling to baptize Jesus until the latter himself suggested the true interpretation of his own principle. The baptism of Jesus had put an end to the period of passive waiting, and opened to his mind the question what he should do. But the first part of



that question was who he really was, and what were his resources. He must take account of himself. There suddenly bloomed out the thought, whose germ we find in his mind many years earlier, that he was the Son of God, and hence not a mere instrument to be worked by divine power. And when this idea made union with the other nascent thought, that he was the Jewish Messiah, there came to him the most remarkable consciousness of his own greatness and the most overwhelming sense of his own responsibility. No other man ever thought himself so great without being manifestly insane; yet no other man has ever so impressed the world with his sanity. Matthew Arnold names his sanity as his prime characteristic. Nothing so surely makes a man appear absurd as to overestimate himself. No one ever put his self-estimate higher than Jesus, yet he never appears absurd. This would seem to indicate that his estimate is correct.

As a Jew, Jesus believed that the Jewish Messiah was to occupy the crowning point of human history. When Jesus thought of his being the Messiah, he thought of occupying that point. But there is no evidence that, until the moment of his baptism, that idea carried with it any answer to the question whether he was to hold that supreme place by virtue of inherent greatness, or simply as a messenger arbitrarily chosen regardless of personal fitness. The latter was more in accordance



with the current Jewish notion. Now the question was being pressed by the terms of his baptism, and the answer came in what was to him a voice from his Father. It is of much importance what that answer was.

Which of these alternatives shall stand to us for truth will depend, if we ever come to have a rational faith or unfaith, upon whether we agree or not with Jesus' estimate of himself. He thought, whether mistakenly or not this is not the place to say, that the Jewish Messiah was to hold the supreme place in history, that he was to be that Messiah, and that he was no mere messenger, but the Son of God; and hence that his greatness, while purely relative and derivative, as a son's must be, was his own, and was real in quality and unmeasured in quantity. If anything like this is what Jesus meant when he called himself the Son of God, and if he arrived at the idea in any such way as has been described, is it such an incredible or incomprehensible conception as it is sometimes made out to be? The author of the Fourth Gospel has reported what purport to be and seem to be genuine sayings of Jesus expressing this double sense of subordination and of independence. "The Son can do nothing of himself;" and yet, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man," the crowning personage in human history.

And now, at the very point where the Gospel narratives agree with the nature of the case in declaring that Jesus came to the distinct consciousness of his sonship, they again agree with the nature of the case in declaring that he came face to face with a series of awful temptations.

We need not undertake to decide exactly how much of this story of the temptation is strict fact, and how much pictorial coloring. The literal accuracy of the account is no longer affirmed, nor the existence in it of a solid kernel of fact any longer denied. The original information must have come from Jesus himself. It is easy to imagine why he should have given such confidences to his disciples. He made free with them in many ways, and always craved their sympathy. Temptations of the same class were always coming up anew, and leading them to ask of him a letting down of the high standard he had set. He must show them that these matters had been settled once for all, and were no longer open questions.

It was the custom of Jesus throughout his ministry to assume that he had met and conquered Satan. The disciples would understand such an assumption in a rather crude and materialistic way, and would almost certainly ask him for an account of the contest. Although it was to himself a most genuine experience, he could tell about it only in pictorial language; and they would inevitably construe it more literally than he meant it. Partly

to save them from the crude and non-moral notions which they would certainly borrow from common habits of thought, he would have to tell the story in his own way.

We must not, however, go too far in supposing that Jesus accommodated himself to their modes of thinking. He evidently believed in a personal Satan, and that he had had personal encounters with him, as is shown by the whole tenor of the Gospel narratives. There was no other belief possible to a man of that age which would have been able to serve the purpose. And Jesus belonged to his age. He was a man among the men of his times, and there was no way by which he could rise to the Jewish conception of actual moral conflict which was being waged, without at the same time adopting the Jewish habit of personifying the power of evil. The idea of Jesus that, in dealing with sin, he dealt with a mighty potentate, a worthy antagonist of one who would found a spiritual empire, was part of his sublime conception of the universe. If the idea of evil as a mere abstraction is truer than that it is in some sense a concrete power, then truth is petty, and fiction is grander and worthier than truth. And so it comes out that our verdict concerning even the value and dignity of truth will depend upon what shall be our verdict concerning Jesus.

Jesus believed that he was confronted by a personal power of evil. The suggestions of evil that

came to him, not, as he well knew, from his own heart, he interpreted as suggestions from an evil person, just as he interpreted the suggestions of good that came to him as the words of his Heavenly Father.

Now, when Jesus became conscious of his personal freedom to act as a son, rather than as an instrument, and to let the very conception and plan of the messianic kingdom be of his human designing, rather than of such passive revealing as Mahomet professed, the sense of responsibility for the choice of his acts and policies had driven him into seclusion. There he would solve the problem what sort of an era the Christ-era should be, and in what way he should introduce it.

His earlier thought that all this would be settled for him had given place to the consciousness that one of the offices of the Jewish Messiah, as the Son of God, was to use his own judgment, because he was also the Son of man. And it was in the exercise of this high right of using his own judgment that his mind had been thrown open to suggestions, and thus the suggestions of evil had come among the rest.

We cannot entertain the supposition of some, that Jesus fell into a trance, and that these temptations seemed to come to him in that state,—seemed to come, for in that state, nothing worthy of the name of temptation could actually come. The trance medium is the victim for the time of a

fixed idea, of a mere mechanical train of associations, or of another personality, and hence he abdicates his own manhood. By virtue of the fact that throughout his life Jesus carried out consistently the character of the Son of God, and not the instrument of God, he never at any time showed any trance symptoms. He met temptation as a man must meet it, in possession of all his faculties, and in full exercise of all the prerogatives of a man.

But there are friends of his who revolt against the idea that he could have been actually tempted. They would fain believe that it was only apparent. Yet to say that he could not be actually tempted is to say that he was not actually a man; it is to cut him loose from history, from the race; it is to cut the saving bond of sympathy which we have with him. It is to say that God has made a race of men, and placed a puppet king to rule over them; it is to deny the incarnation, and thus to overthrow the whole fabric of Christian doctrine, which these very friends of his would be the last to wish to do.

Again, the same attempt to dehumanize him takes the form of asserting that the successful resistance of the temptation was a foregone conclusion. But where free human choice is concerned, there is no such thing as a foregone conclusion until after the event; and then all conclusions are foregone. There is a sense in which it was a

foregone conclusion that Jesus should have resisted; but it is the same sense in which it was a foregone conclusion that Judas should guiltily yield. To speak of a foregone conclusion in any other sense is to reduce Jesus at one stroke again to a mere instrument; it is to insinuate that his consciousness of sonship was an illusion.

It is significant that we are not told that Jesus prayed during that time. His life had been and continued to be a life of prayer. Yet it has been observed that, while he is always said to have prayed before and after any great act, he performed the act on his own responsibility. A story told of Leonard Bacon illustrates the principle. At some convention where weighty action was being too long delayed, some one threatened still further postponement by proposing, "Let us pray." "Pray!" thundered Bacon, "it is no time to pray. It is time to vote." The times of decision are times when self-respect demands that the son depend upon his own unaided powers, when he refrains from asking any longer even the help of his father; there are times when God himself, out of respect for the freedom of his Son, would stand aside and withhold his influence. By a life of constant intercourse with the Father the Son fits himself to decide aright. But when the moment for decision comes, he summons himself to action, withdraws from all eyes, and decides with his own strength.

Every parent knows that there are crises, the most momentous in the life of the child who is growing to maturity, when he must withhold counsel, and withdraw even his presence. It is an awful thought, and yet it is one which is demanded by the highest sense of human dignity, of human sonship, the thought that the critical moments of our lives are moments when even God, if we are to think of Him as a Father, must stand aside and allow us to choose our own way. He will wait with infinite solicitude for the moment when, the right choice having been made, we fall fainting from exhaustion; and then the picture of his sending angels to strengthen us must be a true one. But only an Evil One can be indecent enough to intrude, and take advantage of the crisis to trip us into a surrender of our manhood.

The form which temptation would take to Jesus would naturally be determined by the circumstances of the case, and by his preconceptions. Here was the man who had become aware that he was to be the Jewish Messiah, suddenly thrown upon his own resources to decide what construction he should put upon that term, and how he should set out to realize his messiahship. In his own conscience he is certain that the event can be nothing else than the realization in all men's lives of the same perfect fellowship with a Heavenly Father which has been his own life hitherto, and as a consequence of this a bringing in of a new



sense of human brotherhood. Anything which falls short of this is short of messianic ; anything going beyond this is inconceivable ; anything that may compete with or crowd aside this sense of divine fatherhood and human sonship and brotherhood is sinful and wrong. So, then, the work which lay before him was to undertake to bring the Jewish nation to see things as he saw them ; and then the Jewish nation would bring the world to see them in the same light. Some such idea as this must have been in his mind, in a vague and at first a rather distressingly elusive form, so far as concerned the method of realizing it. To the divining and carrying out methods for realizing this idea, he must devote his mind and strength.

Now comes the temptation. This sense of the fatherhood of God and the sonship and brotherhood of man was the product of his most normal human experiences as the peasant's son and the workingman. All the conditions which make such a sense intelligible and desirable are human conditions. Intimately associated with and almost at the foundation of them all is the problem of bread, of getting a living. That problem is one of the facts which lie at the basis of the institution of the family, in which he had learned the meaning of parenthood, sonship, and brotherhood. If he would bring in that sense of fatherhood and brotherhood as a universal sense, there is no conceivable way of doing it otherwise than on the basis of human-



ity in its natural conditions. He believes that he has preternatural power at his disposal, that if he will he can be independent of these natural conditions, and can at once by an exercise of this power relieve his own lower physical necessities. To do this, however, is to put a distance between himself and common humanity. Now that age, like this, was prone to regard the test of greatness to be the ability to put ourselves on a different footing from common men as regards the satisfaction of these common needs of life.

The temptation comes to every able man, when he first fully realizes his ability and takes his measure, to prove it by prostituting it to the service of his lower nature. Moreover, he is taunted to it by the world, which tells him that "nothing succeeds like success;" that, if he be the man of ability he is conscious of being, his bank account is the best evidence of it. He could endure hunger and the hard bed and scanty clothing; indeed, he does endure these voluntarily in the pursuit of his aims. But the world, the power not himself that makes for evil, says to him in a thousand different ways that he ought to prove, both to it and to himself, that he is the man of ability he thinks he is, by making money. "If you are the Son of God, if you are the man you think you are, put money in your purse, put money in your purse." It is not a temptation that necessarily comes from within. It crowds in upon him from without, yet not in

the person of any one man ; it is an atmosphere. He has to rally all the forces of his personality to meet it, as though it were a sort of personality, like the spirit of the age, or like a great corporation, which the law has to personify in order to deal with. So he may have to personify this influence that makes for evil before he can resist it with success.

Jesus believed that the superior power he was conscious of possessing was a miraculous one. It may be said that he was mistaken in so thinking. But it matters not if he was, so long as he resisted the temptation to try the illicit use of it. It might be said that his belief that he could perform miracles was only the form which his knowledge of his own greatness took in his own mind. If he had tried to make stones bread and failed, he would have lost faith in his own sonship ; and if he had succeeded, or imagined he succeeded, he would have cut the tie that bound him to ordinary human nature, so that a kingdom of salvation held together by personal sympathy between him and other men would have been impossible. He founded his movement at the last on the friendship between him and his disciples. Such a bond would have been impossible had he yielded to this temptation. It would have had no material basis.

But while his miraculous power would have been tested, had he yielded to the temptation, to resist

it needed no miracle. His early grounding in the Scripture, in a pious home, furnished him with the very language of the idea which should drive out the evil suggestion : "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He had learned in the natural way from the Scripture the great truth that there were higher laws than those of appetite, — higher even than those of physical sustenance ; and he would not violate these higher laws. He had learned that his relationship to his Father was one that made him independent of these natural means of subsistence, not by imparting the power to make bread of stones, but by giving him the courage to endure hunger.

Just here he seemed to show a joint in his harness, and the temptation seeks to take advantage of it at once. "He would live for the higher alone, would he? Then," says the tempter, "he is entitled to do so, and he can too ; for the consciousness of his unique greatness gives him the right to claim the highest promises ever put forth by the Almighty. He has been quoting Scripture. Here is a word of Scripture : 'He shall give his angels charge concerning thee ; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.' To whom is it more likely that this applies than to him?" And so it was as though he stood on a pinnacle of the temple, and it was suggested that he cast himself down,

and in his salvation from destruction verify the conviction that he was the Son of God, at the same time winning an unbounded influence over the people as a magician. But no. He had needed no verification of his sense of sonship; and if he did need it, a miracle of levitation would have been a contemptible ally to stand alongside of his consciousness.

He loathed the sort of kingdom he could establish by magical rather than by moral means. It would in truth be established by separating himself from men rather than by identifying himself with them. No motive could lead him to such action but pride and presumption. If he succeeded in this miracle he would be farther removed from men than he would have been by making stones bread.

He would violate no laws, else he could not be himself the first loyal citizen of his new kingdom of humanity, such an one that others could be like him. If he went to creating bread out of stones, and leaping from heights, even if he succeeded, and taught others the secret, he could found no kingdom of humanity thereby. For such a kingdom would be a kingdom of fantastic monsters, in whom humanity could not continue to exist, because the set conditions under which humanity was evolved had been destroyed. Man's relation to his environment, physical, moral, and spiritual, would be wholly changed, and he would therefore be in no

wise the creature he had been. Humanity is what it is, in all its characteristics, from the bottom to the top, because of laws, both physical and spiritual, which have operated from the first. He who expects that it will become different without the serious application of rational and natural and adequate means, and acts upon the expectation, is guilty of presumption. His methods lead to spiritual pride, in so far as he deludes himself into the belief that he is having success. Many reformers fail to observe this ; and their reforms, while seeming to flourish for a time, surely come to naught, while they themselves are either puffed up with pride or presumption, or cast into a reaction of bitterness and despair.

The tempter found that Jesus would not put his conviction that he was the Son of God to the test of acting as though he were not a son, and disobeying presumptuously either the higher or the lower laws of his Father's universe, but that he was determined to establish his kingdom by actions wholly within the range of the human, and that it was to be a human kingdom. Then following still, as it has hitherto, the law of association of ideas, and hence with a psychological probability that goes far to prove the truthfulness of the story, the temptation proceeds to suggest that, since it is to be a purely human kingdom, the way to establish it is the way such kingdoms have been established hitherto. If he is not to found his kingdom upon

miracles high or low, then what need is there that he should recognize himself as the Son of God? What is God for, except miracles, privileges to set aside ordinary modes of procedure? The average unspiritual thought of the world then and now regards God as nothing if not a miracle worker. It will be as though it had no God unless He performs miracles. The average son of royalty acts as though he prized his position chiefly because it seems to entitle him to defy even the laws of decency if he happens to choose. If Jesus is to depend for the founding of his kingdom upon his inherent human powers, why not cut loose from God? If he did not expect God to perform miracles for him, what use had he for God? Why not set up for himself like other kings? He was to do the work himself, why not pay the homage to himself?

Such suggestions came from without. All history puts them forward. Man has been the architect of his own fortunes, therefore the supreme man must be a self-made man. Jesus himself had seen and asserted as much; for whatever miraculous power, that is, power outside his legitimate human power, he believed himself to have, he did not at this time believe he had a right to use, either in sustaining, protecting, or advancing himself. His self-respect as well as his unselfishness required him to submit to all the laws of the republic of humanity, of which he was to be the

first citizen. All the power he was to employ he was to employ as a man. And yet he had been acting on the assumption that all power was given unto him in heaven and in earth; for he had set before himself the mightiest achievement of all the history of the universe, and he had resisted two temptations to call in an outside power which he believed he had at his command.

The first two temptations, for we follow the order of Matthew as the truest to life, were temptations to do that which would either destroy or belittle his belief in his own sonship. The third is calculated to lead him so to exalt his sonship as to ignore God and put himself wholly in God's place. This was a temptation to the worst form of apostasy. But there was that in Jesus which was quick to detect what was the mystery of the evil that thus stood before him. He saw that what was proposed was nothing else than unfilial conduct; it was that the son should gather together the portion of goods that falleth to him, — his own goods, of which the father cannot rightfully deprive him, — and turn away from his father, as though no other relations henceforth subsisted between them. If any man had offered a true son such an insulting suggestion as that he turn his back upon his father, could we think the right answer would be much else than a blow in the face? And if the suggestion came from no individual man, but from the whole evil concourse of



that "world power that makes for unrighteousness," could the Son of God have been worthy of himself if any belittling philosophy had in any way unfitted him for delivering with unreserved energy the personal retort, "Get thee behind me, Satan?"

While, therefore, the Son of God overcame the lower and lesser temptations out of loyalty to his brother men, and to what he believed to be the laws of his father's material and spiritual universe, the last and supreme temptation he conquered by virtue of the quick instinct of filial devotion which resents insult to the person of that father. There came a moment when the noblest conceivable of human-divine motives was needed. Such a motive did not fail the Son of Man, because he had lived his life all these thirty years in obedience to it. To each one of us will surely come, once at least in our careers, such a crisis of temptation as that nothing but that noblest and humanest and divinest instinct, which instantaneously resents insult to a loved one, can avail to save us from apostasy. Are we living such lives as shall nurture in us the spirit of divine sonship against that day? For it is not the ideal, the theory, the doctrine, that can mobilize the forces of personality quickly enough to resist the onset of temptation. The spirit alone can do it. Except a man be born of the spirit of divine sonship he cannot be ready for the supreme crisis.



## V.

### PRAYER.

After this manner therefore pray ye, Our Father. — MATT.  
vi. 9.

PRAYER may perhaps be regarded as that which is most distinctively human. It is almost the only human function which is not claimed, in its rudiments at least, for some lower animal. But unless the cringing of the dog or the bleating of the sheep for the shepherd be a case in point, which can hardly be admitted, man alone prays. With men prayer is practically universal, those who do not pray being exceptional products either of degradation or of culture. "There have been cities," says an ancient historian, "without walls, cities without armies, without kings or governments, cities without markets or commerce, or books or arts. But there have been no cities without places of prayer." This accords with the modern assertion that only where the religious sentiment has done its part has man progressed from the animal to the human. The race has been so nurtured in prayer from time immemorial that if it be an irrational thing, founded upon error, the folly and the falsehood

have become so interwoven with human nature that it is little else than a living tissue of lies. To cease this exercise for enough generations to eliminate its influence would be profoundly to change man's nature for better or for worse. He who believes that prayer is a hallucination, that it has no basis in actual relationships between man and the powers addressed, must expect such a revolution. To those, on the other hand, who believe it has such a basis, the densest and stupidest fetichism appears to have in it a glimmer of the light which will shine more and more unto the perfect day.

Prayer is a *bona fide* personal address, a saying of "Thou" to a person other and greater than human. It is therefore founded upon the conviction of the person who prays that he stands so related to such a person as to permit this address and render it effectual. He must believe that such a being exists, and that he is a responder to those who diligently seek him. If the belief be sincere, the prayer is genuine, whether the petitioner be in praying relationship with such a person or not. The fact that men pray is not of itself evidence that such a person or relationship exists. It is, however, the admitted doctrine of modern times that truth will at some day prevail over error, and hence that, unless those relationships are actual, the belief in them will one day cease; hence the question whether the world's praying is or is not founded upon truth. No religious

culture can possibly preserve the habit of prayer if it be based upon anything else than fact.

The claim of the gospel of Jesus is twofold: first, that it can put forward a conception of the relationship which exists between man and the "Power not himself," which represents that Power as both adorable and exorable, which permits and encourages and even demands prayer; and second, that this conception is not only unassailable when on the defensive, but that it has convincing proof of a scientific order that it is the most nearly adequate and valid symbolic conception ever broached.

As to the conception itself, the idea of the universe being admitted, that of the unity of the power of which it is the exponent goes without argument. What that power is in itself, the power men call God, what is the mystery of its being, the gospel does not say, any more than it says what man is in the mystery of his being. What it does assert, however, is that these two mysterious beings, man and God, have such a kinship between them that their relationship to each other can in no other way be so well named as by the terms "father" and "child." Whether God be a person we do not ask any more than we stop to consider what a person is. The gospel only affirms that, whatever personality may be, whatever God and man may be, the interplay of the forces which are called personal, as manifested in the normal

relationship of father and child, is involved in the relationship between God and man.

This conception makes room for that infinite distance between God and man which so profoundly impresses all whose minds dwell upon the subject. Between the man with power and knowledge and wide range of interest, and the infant whose face is breaking into its first intelligent smile, the distance is well-nigh immeasurable, though it in no way destroys the genuineness of the kinship between them. The gracious condescension of the one and the growth of the other bring them ever nearer together, until the equality, which in kind was from the first, begins to appear even in degree. Toward the Infinite Father our path is to be trodden in the same way the child treads the path toward equality with the human parent. The distance between the full-grown man and the Infinite Father is greater in comparison than that between the human father and the infant of weeks ; a distance to be bridged, not by comprehension, but by apprehension and infantile trust, yet one across which faith and love cross readily, as the power of gravitation crosses celestial spaces. The attitude of the wisest man toward God must be similar to that of the youngest child toward its parent ; it must be childlike. In this conception there is room for all of modern agnosticism, except that which despairs of the Unknowable. Whoever trusts, not despairingly, but lovingly and

optimistically trusts the Unknowable, may be an agnostic and yet find room for prayer.

There is room likewise in this conception for all of modern agnosticism, for all of that faith in the indefinite growth of knowledge which gives so much elasticity to the world to-day. The only thing removed from the bound of possible knowledge is the mystery of being itself. This belongs to man as well as to God, and the fact that it does so is one of the suggestions of kinship between them. All other knowledge, by virtue again of their kinship, belongs alike to God and to man, and hence no limit is fixed to the acquisition of knowledge by man, as he grows in his likeness to his Divine Father. This age will not be content with any conception of man which does not permit of the unlimited expansion of human knowledge in every direction. This Christian conception of the gospel leaves all the room the age asks.

It makes place also for the modern idea of the complete uniformity and continuity of natural law to as high a degree as it is possible for human powers to carry generalization. In the nature of inductive logic generalizations can never be quite complete. If this be thought of as the only limit to them, which seems to be the demand of the modern mind, then the world must be thought of as practically infinite. The conception of an Infinite Father, whose children are growing indefinitely into likeness to him, seems to demand, at

least to make possible, the thought of a practically infinite universe as a home for them.

Yet this conception demands that this mighty universe be only a means to an end ; that not things but persons be made ends in themselves ; and that all the uniformity and continuity of natural law, instead of fettering the interplay of personal forces and the cherishing of personal intimacies, only render more easy and secure such fellowship. What language needs, to render it a sure and ready medium of expression, is a certain uniformity, and even rigidity of structure. Only when it has attained to that is it fit for classic literature, fit to become the embodiment of the world mind. Likewise no more uniformity or rigidity of structure is found in the nature of things than is needed to make it a fit ground for the noblest and most permanent personal relationships. Upon the basis of uniformity and rigidity, arranged in multitudinous combinations, and with the help of that small fraction of original creative impulse which we men are conscious of possessing, but which forever eludes the retort of science, human relationships flourish, and find nature's fixedness a charter of freedom rather than an edict of repression. Likewise through the uniformity of nature, rather than in spite of it, man may be thought of as holding unrestrained personal intercourse with his Divine Father.

The fixedness of nature gives to God a classic

tongue wherewith to speak to man rather than a jargon. This makes room for prayer and its answers without resort on one hand to crude miracles, or on the other to the fatal notion of a pre-determined harmony between the prayer and its answer, which idea, once realized, would mark the petitioner as a slave or idiot. If fatherhood be the fundamental characteristic of Godhood, then the service of God's children is the chief end of nature, and fitness for this service as a household arrangement is its fundamental law. So the whole creation must be thought of as plastic, responding to the touch of parental love, answering the cries of children, so that, if need be, the very units of measurement, by which uniformity is determined in the laboratory, shall shorten and lengthen as the ends of love may require. Why should not the universe, with its pulsations coming from the heart of the Eternal, feel the influence of the beating hearts and the eager desires of his children? And if it does, or if it does not, who can determine? The units of measure employed by science are themselves all relative. It is possible, within the limits of this conception, for man and God to talk together and interchange services without in any way upsetting the work of exact science.

It is true that this idea of the divine fatherhood discourages that kind of prayer which defies and despises natural uniformities. An established uniformity is probably the expression of a settled



and hence wise economy on the part of the Father, and is in ordinary circumstances to be cheerfully acquiesced in or reckoned with. To the truly filial mind it will appear that the uniform fact that certain substances are antidotes to arsenic should suggest that the Father meant them to be so used, and that He did not wish to be importuned to produce the results in other ways when they were not at hand. It is the part of a spoiled child to insist upon the setting aside of the order of the household for trivial cause; not but that he may sometimes have his way; for one of the methods of the wise parent in dealing with his children is to let them have their own spoiled way as a form of discipline. A child may be permitted to eat itself sick, and the household economy may be such as to seem to give this permission to the willful child who insists upon it. An answer to prayer is therefore not to be always interpreted as a mark of the divine favor. The psalmist says that when the Israelites petulantly demanded flesh in the wilderness, Jehovah gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls. The machinery of retributive or, at least, of disciplinary punishment is set in operation in that case by prayer; and if we can see that machinery occasionally working in sight, we are not forbidden to infer that it also works out of sight. The evidences for prayer from the answers to it which can be recorded are for this reason to be discounted. Only that prayer



can be truly said to touch the divine heart which is uttered in the truly filial spirit; and such prayer is not watching to test itself by what it can discern of the answer. The conscious ignorance of the petitioner and the infinite wisdom of the Father are such that the filial spirit forbids insistence upon an answer in exact terms.

Yet here we must not harshly discourage the importunity and simplicity of prayer. God, as a true father, loves to hear the prattle of his children so long as they are truly childlike, no matter how ignorant they may be. Ignorance must be no bar of approach to God, else his fatherhood is imperfect. Sometimes we are tempted to cease to pray, because we are certain that God knows better than we do what is for our good. This would be a mistake. The true idea of father and child makes room for an infinite parental delight in the sound of children's voices and the awakening of children's independent desires, even though they ask what cannot be granted. The parent is not annoyed nor discouraged because the child asks for the moon. We must let the idea of the divine fatherhood have full sweep.

Yet we could not continue to prattle to God if we were so highly and mightily philosophical as to think of Him as giving no weight at all to what we say, — as patronizingly enjoying the music of our voices without letting them influence his mind a particle. Nothing will more certainly hush the

childish voice and chill its spirit, than to be convinced that the parent is in no way moved by it in the direction it is meant to move him. But if we be God's children, we are children, like Him, with incipient wills and intelligence, entitled to and doubtless receiving from Him their due measure of respect. My own father was a better father than God, unless God began very early in my life to let his decisions concerning me hinge largely upon what I wished Him to do; not because He might not have known better, but because it was better for the development of my manhood that He should place responsibilities upon me. Jesus spoke as a representative man when he said, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself, and hath given him authority" — to use his own judgment. When the Pharisees accused him of having made himself equal with God, he not only did not deny it, but replied with a Scripture text meant to show that in a sense all men were gods. A certain species of equality with God is involved in being his children, and this involves the right of self-assertion. It takes a person, a self, to pray as well as to be prayed to. He who prays must say "I" as well as "thou." Until the sense of sonship as reciprocal to that of fatherhood is awakened in a man he cannot pray. That is why the cringing of the dog is not prayer. He has not "said that I am I." Abraham was not less but more the friend of God

when he stood up in the ardor of importunate intercession and demanded, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Prayer does not depend upon that slavish sense of absolute dependence which throws itself without thought or choice upon God, and proposes to lose its will in his. It is loyalty, not servility, bowing at the last to his superior authority; that is the true meaning of that word of Jesus, "Not my will but thine be done." Whatever is lawful for me to strive for is lawful to pray for. And those who have acted most strenuously have always prayed most sincerely.

There are times when God, if He be like the best earthly parent, will be touched and moved by even insane and seemingly willful importunity. Shall I pray for the recovery of a loved one afflicted with what science calls a fatal disease? Well, in the first place, the judgments of science are never quite absolute, and in the second place if love constrains, real love, and not mere selfish desire or disregard of divine wisdom, — if love so sweeps reason and will off its feet that I cry out and hold on in the face of all evidence of what may be God's will, — I think He will be very tender toward me. God, if He is like Jesus (and we teach that He is, more than like any one else), is tender toward the mistakes which are made through love. But it must be real love, not passion; it must be simple, not reflex. It will not do to look in the glass at such a time and felicitate ourselves on

having been so importunate. The parent knows the full difference between the simple and earnest and sincere protest of the child, sure it is right, although for the time so bereft of reason that it is even rebellious and insulting, and the willful and spoiled protest. He treats the two in very different ways. Where the mind of the true, fundamentally obedient child underlies, there is no limit to the rightful importunity of prayer. Where it does not, God must exercise discipline.

In brief, this conception of the fatherhood of God and the childhood of man, of the law of the household as the supreme law of the universe, needs only to be fully grasped and developed in all its possible applications to bring prayer to a position where it is unassailable by the criticism of science. Wherever science threatens the overthrow of any particular belief concerning prayer, its criticism may be anticipated by applying to that belief a more nearly perfected conception of the right relation of father and child and of a household unison. Or where such belief has been already destroyed by science, its destruction has only contributed to a more nearly perfected conception of prayer. Whatever current ideas of prayer are really anti-scientific, they are so because they are not adjusted to the ideal of fatherhood and childhood. Science has done excellent service in forcing the refinement of such ideas. In other cases the spirit of Jesus, who made no mistakes

in this matter, has brought about the refinement by introducing the filial temper without the knife of criticism. When science has made all the criticism possible it still leaves prayer in the spirit of Jesus unassailed. It is unassailable.

To many minds this appears to be the supreme advantage in the Christian idea, and they are satisfied with it. They are glad they can perch high enough to be out of the range of hostile weapons. To them the so-called warfare of science against Christianity has been the driving of the latter from one branch to another until, now securely swinging on the topmost, it finds it can no longer be disturbed, and again puts its head under its wing and goes to sleep. It is not a militant bird. It has no thought of taking the aggressive. It will cackle in triumph simply because it has saved its neck.

It is true that some consent to occupy this defensive attitude under protest, because it is the best they can do.

But Christianity ought not to be content with a position which is simply unassailable. If it is, it has sold its birthright, that of the Israelitish expectation of a king who should lead a movement of world conquest. The gospel must undertake to fulfill that expectation. It must affirm that its idea of the relation of God and man is not only unassailable, but that the forward movement of science, instead of merely failing to dethrone it, must enthrone it. It declares not only that the

future man may pray, but that he must. "Every knee shall bow"—"in the name of Jesus." That last is the key to its aggressive campaign. Science asks for facts. The gospel puts Jesus forward as a fact, and demands of science what it will do with him as a fact. It asks science to say whether it can deal with him under any other working theory than that of the fatherhood of God, and the sonship of man. It challenges the attempt.

It asks science whether it can account for Jesus in any way which shall not acknowledge him as the crown of human history, the flower of human development. It claims that measured, not by metaphysics, but by the purely inductive method, Jesus is the preponderatingly significant fact in the known universe, and, hence, the key to the sort of symbol one shall use to express an adequate attitude toward the inscrutable power behind that universe. The universe is to be judged by its specific product, as we judge a tree by its specific fruit, not by its accidental galls and warts. Now the specific fruit of this universe, so far as we know it,—and we know enough to see not a chaos, but a universe,—its final product, is the human race. And the specific, the conquering, surviving product of the human race, worked out in organic courses of history, is Jesus the Christ. He, therefore, is the unique, the characteristic fruit, the begotten of the Eternal Power behind things; and that Eternal is to be thought of in such terms as

are borrowed from Jesus the Christ. From the point of view of the universe, the sum of things, Jesus is the supreme manifestation of its meaning, and, hence, of whatever may be known of the mystery which it conceals. Hence, except that he is a derived being, the underived Eternal reality is more like Jesus than like anything else conceived. It alone is self-existent; he is a derived existence like ourselves. It must therefore be thought of as the Source, that is, the Father of Jesus, — a worthy Father of such a son. But if the Eternal be worthy to be thought of as the Father of Jesus, it must be thought of as approachable by every childlike being; for he was; and he is not greater than that out of which he came. Thus science, seeking the supremely specific and hence supremely significant fact in the known universe, will, we allege, one day, and at no distant day, point to Jesus as the being whose nature lends meaning to the Eternal itself, and not only warrants but proves the validity of the conception of that power as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From another point of view, equally scientific and making a more practical appeal to life, Jesus vindicates the conception of a Father who is to be prayed to. Science is vindicating not only the claim that Jesus occupies the supreme place in human history, but the further claim that he occupies it by right of what he actually is: that he is



the normal man. If he be the normal man, then his attitude toward the inscrutable Power is most nearly the normal one. Now that attitude was one of filial trust, and this was not an occasional or incidental attitude, but one which was an essential part of his whole personality. He would not have been the man he was if he had held any other attitude. His very personal identity was fixed in that way. Of his own self, he declared, he could do nothing. He was so identified with the Father that they were one. He would not have constituted a unit, but only a fragment, without the Father, so close was the relationship between them. Now he who would lead a normal life must live the Christ-life: and he who would do that must be like Jesus, not independent of the Supreme Being, but relative to Him, a son, whose life is whole only as it is identified with God, so that he is a mere fragment apart from that relationship.

This, then, is the gospel which we preach; not merely that we may say, "Our Father," and have an ideal of human relationship to the divine which no man can successfully gainsay, but that the development of the universe from primitive fire-mist, or whatever was primitive in producing the human race, and the development of human history in producing Jesus, have shown that there is no genuine or complete manhood which does not say, "Our Father" in the spirit of Jesus Christ.



## VI.

### THE GOLDEN RULE.

And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. — LUKE vi. 31.

THIS verse begins with “and,” showing that in the mind of the writer, at least, it formed part of the more extended discourse in which it has its setting. This in turn had its occasion in circumstances which are not obscurely hinted at. Jesus’ attention had doubtless been called to the feud between his countrymen and the foreign soldiery which kept them in subjection. Wanton abuse and insult, petty oppression and robbery, were the lot of the conquered people ; and it was not strange that against the oppressor and all his agents the bitterest hatred should be cherished, the most uncharitable judgments formed, and the most useless and suicidal resistance frequently made. It was intolerably humiliating to the honest and innocent citizen, trained as a Jew to a sense of his rights, to receive an unprovoked blow given in the insolence of power, which could be resented only at the peril of life. It was certainly outrageous that any soldier who happened to be chilly or

lazy might take his coat or impress him as a beast of burden. The sensitiveness of a proud but unfortunate people naturally inferred that both the soldier and his government were prompted by malice.

In the light of a calm philosophy, however, like that of Epictetus, this judgment is seen to be hasty. The Roman government was not deliberately cruel. Even toward the Jew who so tried its patience, it cherished no ill feeling. It exterminated him when it had to exterminate, for the sake, not of revenge, but of policy. It neither loved nor hated. It was as soulless as a modern trust. Like that it simply ruled and collected revenue, using for that purpose such mercy or such ruthlessness as was likely to be most effective. It bought its common soldiers in the cheapest market; and that they were fierce and brutal to civilians was an incident of their efficiency in war.

The soldiers themselves were no more malicious than the government. They were such men as the age produced for the place, and their brutality had no worse motive than thoughtless selfishness; while to their victims it appeared as though both they and their masters were moved by diabolical hatred, and merited the bitterest feeling in return. And this rankling hatred in the hearts of the oppressed against the oppressor was the cause of more than half their misery.

The task, set for the Messiah by popular ex-

pectation, of delivering the Jews from political servitude, Jesus had declined. Unsophisticated as he may have been, his instincts warned him that a political deliverance would have been at that time a deceitful boon, and that the first thing necessary, and the only thing feasible, was to undertake to impart a moral superiority, which should make any other yoke than that of sin seem trifling. Heavy certainly were the taxes, the insults many times harder to bear, and the robberies and impressings most humiliating and exasperating. But the spirit in which they were received made them tenfold worse. If only a more reasonable, not to say a sweeter, spirit could be infused, the poison in the sting of political servitude would be neutralized, present unavoidable evils might be borne, and the future awaited with patience and hope. If the feeling of insult and exasperation could be removed, an unprovoked blow would hurt no more than any other, and even its repetition could be invited without shrinking. It was bad to be struck on one cheek. But even mere philosophers had learned how to turn the other. It was hard to lose one's coat. It was worse to be warmed ever afterward by the fires of resentment. Better let the cloak go too. Better submit to twice the injustice, if one can thereby so conquer self as to cease blaming for a devil the robber who is only a brute, and only imperfectly responsible for being a brute. Philosophy alone, that is, reasonableness

aside from sweetness, could so far allay hatred, and remove the sense of humiliation. It was easy enough to see, if we would but look with impartial eyes, that the government and soldiers were no more malicious than the seasons, which also inflicted hardships; and to accept the inevitable evils of foreign rule as one accepts the weather, without fretting or cherishing resentment. Standing by itself, the maxim not to judge, that is not to attribute moral blame, is a dictate of philosophy. Consistently applied, it means the depersonification of God and man. To its eye sin is but a malady, and should excite no indignation. Conversely, holiness is a symptom of health, and should arouse no more moral admiration than beauty. Jesus as a Stoic philosopher might have laid down the rule, "Judge not."

But Jesus was more than a Stoic philosopher. His doctrine had a flavor of something more vital than "philosophy" could give. It has been characterized by a great critic of our age as not only "reasonableness," but "sweet reasonableness." The sweetness was an ingredient of as much importance as the reasonableness. And this sweetness it was which forbade the inculcation of such moral indifferentism as would be involved in the depersonification of God and man, and the treatment of Roman government and soldiers as though they possessed no more moral character than the climate. It was the aim of Jesus not to banish

the moral feelings, but to transform them. He would change hatred not into callousness, but into love. He would change life from sour not to insipid, but to sweet. The Stoic found life full of painful emotions, and knew no remedy but to empty it. Jesus had the secret of transmuting these emotions from bitter to blessed. And though it be a dark saying, if remembered it will one day emit a light of its own, that Jesus' power of renewing life without denying anything which rightly belongs to the emotional side of it has in it the prophecy of the resurrection.

Jesus' injunction, therefore, not to judge, which is a part of this discourse wherein the so-called golden rule is imbedded, is itself to be judged in the light of its context, which also contains the injunction to love our enemies, and apparently to practice the rule of non-resistance. It seems to aim at more than to show the unreasonableness of hating men, and to seek to clear the way for loving them. But, the pharisee and moralist will ask, if we cannot judge, how shall we love more than hate? For if we cannot judge, we can neither approve nor condemn. Here comes in that transcendental philosophy of Jesus, whose principle is that love shall be bestowed not according to but independently of approval. Jesus loved men and inculcated love, not because they were good or bad, but because we are the children of the Highest, whose attribute it is to be kind unto the unthank-

ful and the evil. In some way, indeed, his love was like that of the Father, in that it embraced the bad more eagerly than the good, not because he liked their badness, but because he pitied their fallen condition. And then this higher philosophy transcends its own maxim of not judging, and at the prompting of love judges not that this or that man ought to be blamed, but that he needs to be saved.

In the spirit of Jesus, therefore, we are, after all, enjoined to judge men, not that we may intelligently hate them, for we cannot do that; not even that we may intelligently love them, for love should precede intelligence; but that we may intelligently serve them, and work for their highest good. This may perhaps be the sense in which it is true that "the saints shall judge the earth." Those whom Jesus warned not to judge had probably not made enough start in sainthood to warrant them in judging; and we should be careful with what motives we exercise that office. Until we love men we are not fit to judge them. Indeed, the judge who sits upon the bench of civil justice and the jurymen in the box are the better equipped for their office if they love the men they have to deal with. You will get justice more frequently from such men. Love will not make the judgment less severe, though it make it more merciful; its judgment will be with the merciful severity of the physician.

And thus it is we find Jesus endeavoring to

bring to bear upon the peculiarly distressing relationships in which he found men the principles, not merely of ordinary Stoical philosophy, but of that transcendental philosophy of life which swayed his own mind, — the thought of the Supreme Being as Father, and hence of the normal relationships of men as those of a family. Accordingly the ideal human society, which he would fain see beginning to be realized there in Galilee, was to be founded upon this actually supreme fact of the universe, which was only an extension of the supreme fact of his childhood. Now the supreme fact of his childhood, as of the childhood of most of us, was familyhood, which had conditioned and determined all his early life. To him believing, as he said, that the child held the true secret of humanity, it seemed that familyhood was the formula for expressing the supreme fact of the universe. Human society, therefore, to his mind, would harmonize with supreme fact, that is, with eternal truth and law, with the true conditions of success and survival, only when it realized familyhood.

Now the law of familyhood is that love is bestowed not in proportion to but independently of merit. Indeed, love flows more lavishly where merit is wanting, as blood comes more freely to the diseased or wounded part, as though to heal the deficiency. The best rather than the worst construction is put upon the motives of an un-



worthy member. If the head of the house is appealed to, it is not that he may punish, so much as that he may reform. The father does the best possible for each member ; and although the law of discipline may make it needful that he apportion favors according to merit, his love follows its own law, which is different. Even when a system of punishment seems to be retributive, it should be assumed, if its author is wise, that retribution is a means to restoration. And if the punishments of the Divine Father fail to restore the erring, it is not because they were not so designed, but because man, as himself a divine son, has the power, if he so chooses, to ruin himself in spite of the will of the Father.

It was this principle of familyhood as the normal social law, which Jesus boldly proclaimed, and aimed at introducing at once into Galilean society to sweeten the sources of life. It was useless to preach it to the soldiers. He was not in touch with them, both because of differences of language and nationality, and because they were successful aggressors, and it is seldom of use to preach to such. But to his countrymen he preached that they should receive the insolence of the soldiers as, in the large mixed family in which he had grown up, the injured members had learned to take the treatment of any who were disposed to do wrong, — with unlimited forbearance.

As a touchstone to right action in these premises,



he enunciated the maxim, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." In the light of this context the maxim becomes more luminous. It was not new. It had in substance been uttered many times before. But it had been a mere uncoördinated gem, one of many hundreds of moral aphorisms. Jesus places it in vital relationships, so that it becomes an organic part of a new social philosophy. It was already in successful operation in thousands of instances, as the law of internal administration of so important an institution as the home. He finds it there, and proposes to give it a universal validity by giving universal application to the home idea, the home motive, the home spirit.

Administered in the home spirit, the maxim of doing as we would be done by has all the characteristics of a successful social law, with its tendencies both conservative and revolutionary, for society demands combined stability and progress. The maxim must be rationally applied; no principle can bring anything but failure unless it is so applied. The fool is equally dangerous, whether his principles be good or bad. To be rationally applied it must be rationally comprehended, and it can be so comprehended only in view of that fundamental idea of Jesus, that the human race is a household, with all the peculiar combinations of equalities and inequalities, and complex interrelationships which are found in the household. The

doctrine of human equality founded upon the idea of brotherhood differs from that founded upon the idea of men as a lot of manufactured articles, turned out by the machinery of impersonal nature, or struck off by the mint of a divine creative fiat, as the Declaration of Independence, dominated by eighteenth-century deism, probably meant to assert. The idea of divine-human familyhood implies an infinite diversity of characteristics, so that no intelligent man can presume to make his mind the exact measure of another man's. It suggests the fact of different stages of growth, and of all kinds of mutual interdependences and interresponsibilities. It suggests that we may be responsible, not only for what we do to others, but for what they do to us, and for what they would wish to do or to have done. It forbids us to interpret the maxim, as it is often interpreted, that we should do to others as we wish they would do to us, or as they wish we would do to them. It is not what we wish, but what we should wish if we were in their place; and not only that, but what we should wish if we were in their place without losing all our present advantages of wisdom and point of view. For both we and they are children, sometimes spoiled and bad children.

The man when a child did not wish to be punished for his faults; when he became a man, he wished he had been punished. Now he proposes to punish his child; and when it does not wish to

be punished, he persists, knowing that the day will come when it will thank him. Putting himself in the place of the child, he does not so do it as to revert to his childish unwisdom, but retaining his maturer sense he asks, "Now if I were a child, and knew as much as I do, what should I choose?" What we would others should do for us should be determined by the highest considerations before we reverse this rule to determine what we should do toward them. The elder brother must determine his action to his younger brother by what he would morally justify a still older brother in doing to him. The wise man must act toward the foolish, not as he would have the foolish act toward him, but as he would justify a still wiser in acting. The good man must deal with the bad in the light of the fact that there is One in the sight of whom his own righteousness is as filthy rags. The strong must so treat the weak as he would have the Almighty treat him. The maxim points ever upward, not downward, and ends nowhere short of the perfect ideal in the Godhead. In practical every-day use it is meant to afford a ready appeal from a selfish and hence biased tribunal to an unbiased one, as the surveyor by reversal of his leveler corrects or detects any suspected error in it.

In his self-respecting moods, no man desires his neighbor to submit to be robbed by him; it is not therefore of the essence of this rule that he should submit to be robbed. The principle of non-resist-

ance is not of the essence of the Golden Rule. In his better moments each man wishes that if ever he becomes an aggressor, he may meet with resistance both for his own sake and for the sake of others ; that if he becomes an oppressor, he may be met with insurrection ; that if, overcome by his baser nature, he attempts outrage or seduction, he may fail, if necessary, at the point of the pistol or at the loss of life. It would be better, and he knows it. He is therefore justified in resisting these things. There is nothing in the principles of Jesus forbidding a war of resistance to tyranny, nothing forbidding legal contests, nothing forbidding conflicts on occasion between capital and labor, nothing forbidding the operation, under proper restrictions, of the element of competition in business.

There are doubtless many cases of wrong, where the evils of resistance are worse than those of non-resistance, as in those to which Jesus directly refers ; even, as in the same cases, where the moral resistance is in exact proportion to physical non-resistance. Non-resistance may be a form of resistance of the highest efficiency. Doubtless in thousands of instances all down the history of the world the true practical application of the Golden Rule would have involved the subordinate maxim of non-resistance. It would have prevented numberless wars.

There is a weakness and narrowness in mere

maxim-following, which is illustrated in the sects founded upon the principle of non-resistance and refusal to engage in political action. The non-resistant principles of Jesus were uttered in view of special cases: The maxim is a special application of that of doing as we would be done by. Given the special circumstances, it holds; outside these circumstances, it fails to hold.

Indeed, this is true of all maxims. Maxims are made for men, not men for maxims. A maxim is a tentative embodiment for practical purposes of a law too elusive to be clearly grasped in a practical formula. The common law of our system of jurisprudence, itself intangible, takes shape in certain legal maxims, useful for every-day practice, but the letter of which must be again and again transcended by the spirit of the law. The common law of the social system which Jesus is creating is love, itself indeterminate, and needing to take practical shape in maxims. But no maxim can practically cover all the ground; and even this greatest of them would become infinitely complicated in operation, if love could not at times overleap it and reach its mark by short cuts.

While, therefore, in all our every-day concerns we steadily apply it, we need so to cherish the spirit of the law behind it that emergencies shall not leave us hopelessly entangled in the details of legalism, but shall find us ready to act unerringly by pure instinct. This instinct becomes more

necessary in these days, because society has become so complex, that no one dares to reckon the effect of anything he does with sole reference to himself and the other partner to the transaction. In my direct dealing with one person there are always involved important indirect dealings with others, many of them readily calculated, and others incalculable. If, therefore, I am to act with consideration, my calculations must take a wide range. The employer and the employee cannot, though they try, deal with one another only. Each is so situated that he represents the interests of many. The employer who gives higher wages than the business will warrant brings disaster, not only on himself and his stockholders, but on the employees who receive the wages, and he demoralizes the general market. And if the employee accepts lower wages than he need to accept, he deranges the labor market and brings down the general scale; and so long as he continues to accept reductions, the scale will keep falling, forced by the laws of trade. No man hireth to himself; no man is hired to himself; all belong together.

So the principle, not merely of a rational selfishness, but of a rational unselfishness, may require every man to make the best possible bargain, and to employ whatever lawful and honorable means are feasible to make the best bargain, in buying and selling his goods or his labor. In itself considered, there is no moral wrong in a pool or

trust or union of capital or of labor. The wrong comes in when power thus gained is used despotically beyond the limits of fair bargaining; or when despotisms thus attempted are supinely permitted, because the individual citizen has not enough public spirit to inform himself how easily the remedies may be applied, or sufficient moral courage to apply those remedies. The anthracite coal combination is less the product of criminal tyranny on the part of the men who control it, than of criminal ignorance and carelessness on the part of the public which permits itself to be robbed: the strong members of society who might put an end to the evil being bribed into acquiescence, because the burden falls chiefly on the weaker members, and because they themselves manage on the whole to share in similar plunder of one sort or other. The most important application of the Golden Rule in these days would be in its application to the strong and intelligent, who, while they do not directly oppress the weaker and more ignorant, stand by and see them oppressed. The Samaritan's action rebuked not the thieves who robbed and beat the man so much as the priest and the Levite, who would never be guilty of such a crime, but who passed him by on the other side.

Throughout the centuries, however, circumstances have been more and more conditioned by the spirit of Jesus, so that the duty and necessity



of resistance to evil have been growing more rare, and the privilege of non-resistance more common, until to-day the eyes of the world, weary of strife, sick of war and contention, turn with inexpressible longing and a prophetic hope toward the consummation of the era of Jesus, when the motive which now rules in the ideal household and in myriads of actual ones shall rule in society at large, when the word *brotherhood* shall belong, not to the phrase-makers only, but also to the practical law-makers and institution-builders. If each of us who recognizes the authority of Jesus were to do, not our *pro rata* share, but all we can, the end would come almost at once. More impossible each day is it becoming for any man to live to himself or to die to himself. Whether it will or no, the race is being forced to live in the most intimate family relationships, and to develop some kind of family motives. The question is no longer whether it shall be a family, but whether it shall be the family of God or the family of the devil, whether earth shall be a heaven or a hell. Political, industrial, commercial, social institutions of all kinds represent the realization of the family law in the world, the growth of the corporate life as distinct from mere individualism. As this corporate life becomes more pervasive, the importance of the spirit which vivifies these institutions increases. So difficult is it longer for the individual to ignore the social, that the question is becoming



imperative whether these institutions embody the spirit of a God or the spirit of a devil. The only spirit which the world will ever recognize as that of a God is the spirit of Jesus. Never before did the world so sincerely confess that its institutions ought to embody the spirit of Jesus. Never before did it so realize that they do not. Never before was it so ready to believe that they might. Never before was it so near to the Kingdom of God.

## VII.

### JESUS AND MODERN HELLENISM.

Sir, we would see Jesus. — JOHN xii. 21.

THE courtesy of this request, like the request itself, was characteristic of the men who preferred it. They were Greeks, who happened to be among the concourse of people who had come up to Jerusalem to the Jewish feast; business men, perhaps, there to take advantage of the trading opportunities of the great gathering; much more probably, however, proselytes, embracing, eagerly or desperately, the Jewish hope of a Messiah. A truly notable phenomenon was this of the proselyte, a man whose whole attitude of soul was as though he were asking to see Jesus. Belonging to a once great but now decaying, despairing, conscienceless civilization, he was the man who was anxious to come to the knowledge of any way to escape from spiritual desolation, and, notwithstanding the contempt of the world of culture, was willing to accept the optimism of the Jewish creed, which affirmed the promise of a deliverer.

In some respects the proselyte might be more predisposed toward Jesus than the born Israelite.

To the Israelite hope was hereditary, but too often for this reason it was but an empty, formal hope, not at all an answer to the cry of heart and flesh for the living God. It was not possible for the proselyte to be a mere traditionalist, for he had already been compelled to part company with the beautiful legends and fascinating speculations which were the traditions of his fathers. In turning away from honored and cherished beliefs, to accept a despised faith, he had cast in his lot with a race of social and political pariahs. He never could have done this had he not known the gnawings of soul-hunger. Judaism would hardly attract any Greek who was not endowed with a high order of spiritual appetency. The same cravings, therefore, which had brought him as far as Judaism were fitted to carry him on toward the Christ. Having believed Moses in no traditional or conventional way, but because of a real grasp of the ground truth to which Moses bears witness, he was ready to believe Jesus. And since a genuine spiritual longing does not quiet or set aside, but rather awakens and quickens the best mental powers and shows them how to find the most direct paths to truth, it is not strange that those Greeks sought to see Jesus. For being Greeks, they were natural and skillful truth-seekers, and in becoming proselytes they came under no obligations to pursue the methods in vogue among the Jews, for determining what was to be believed.

These methods would seem to a Greek to be neither necessary nor natural nor rational. There was too much instinctive critical intelligence in the Greek mind to permit it to take up with mere rabbinical Judaism. It had come to Judaism rather because it sought aid in the exercise of the God-vision. And it was likewise concerned to know him who was reputed to have come from God. When he was within reach, they would bring their powers of discernment to bear directly upon him. They would see Jesus.

It would not be consistent with the Hellenistic culture in which they had been reared to permit the self-elected rulers of Jewish thought to determine the exact contents of their beliefs. Whatever else it had done for Greece, the death of Socrates had established the principle of intellectual liberty, and every Greek was his own thinker with, if anything, too scant respect for the authority of scribes. For the same reason the Greek had learned how little heed should be given to popular clamor, even when it did not, if ever it did not, merely reflect the prejudices of the dictators of thought, translated into the dialect and cleverly uttered through the mouth of the unthinking populace. They might hear much truth concerning Jesus from all classes, but between fair statement and distorted misrepresentation their own judgments must determine. Mere hearsay knowledge of anything really worth knowing about

would not satisfy a conscientious Greek; while second-hand knowledge of Jesus, said to be the Messiah, would not be enough for a proselyte who was watching keenly for the realization of Israel's hope, and, having followed his independent judgment out of heathenism into Judaism, must have felt entitled to continue its exercise in pursuing the logic of Judaism to its end. They must see Jesus.

It would be scarcely worth our while to note the efforts of these Greeks to come into personal intercourse with Jesus, if they were an odd or exceptional class of persons. But although it is a purely fanciful notion which imagines that this incident has been invented by some Hellenizing author of this Gospel to typify the attitude of the Greek mind toward Jesus, it is probably true that it was recalled and recorded as an illustration of a fact which afterward became of wide dimensions and much importance,—the way in which the stream of proselytism, which had been setting into Judaism, was turned away to the new cult, as we know it was.

The Greek proselyte stands for an enduring type more numerous to-day than it ever was, and constituting in our complex life an element whose importance we cannot afford to ignore, and whose excellences we can but admire. Broad and cosmopolitan in its intelligence and culture, it knows what the world as a whole is thinking of; per-

ceives the *Zeit-Geist* as a manifest spiritual potency successively solving doubts, and starting deeper ones to take their place and thus send the fathoming plummet down farther into life's mysteries. It is awakened from dogmatic slumber, emancipated from the bondage of traditionalism, has cut loose from conventionalism in belief, works in the harness of no party, and wears the blinders of no system. It knows the flimsiness of much solemn argumentation, the unconscious humor in many courses of lectures, the hollowness of many loud professions, the naïve hypocrisy of much sanctimonious behavior. It knows the color of the false fires of sectarianism upon our altars. It has measured the force of the attacks which have been made upon cherished dogmas, and the weakness of their defenses. It understands the crushing logic of pessimism, and it is with a languid interest that it cuts the leaves of the latest treatise in defense of faith, if it thinks worth while cutting them at all, — so much rubbish has it waded through to no purpose. The Hellenism of our day is at first marked by an air of sad and thorough disillusionment. It counts for not a few in numbers and much more in influence. It holds the editorial chairs of many of our leading newspapers, it conducts our solid periodicals, writes our fiction and our poetry, pushes forward our scientific enterprises, teaches in our schools and colleges, engineers our great public works, organ-

izes our workingmen's societies, and in fact has a large share in the creating of the future of history.

Much of this modern Hellenism is indifferent to spiritual things, and reckons them undeserving of attention. Much of it is saddened by an unwelcome agnosticism which has forced itself upon it, and it clings to the remains of its earlier faith only with the dumb and foolish despair of one who cannot bear to let the casket containing the body of a loved one be carried forth to burial. They love the faith of their childhood; but it is dead, and they know no basis for the hope of a resurrection. Some have grown bitter and cynical toward what seem to be the illusions and superstitions of youth and ignorance; and many are drowning the voice that calls, vainly as they think, for objects of spiritual hope and faith, by plunging into the thickest of the struggle for wealth or power or position.

But there is a class of modern Hellenists corresponding in every essential particular to that of our early Greek proselytes. They surrender nothing of their Hellenistic independence of mind. The style of their thinking is the same as that of other Hellenists; but its direction is determined by a moral earnestness and hopefulness which gives the distinguishing mark to their characters, making of them proselytes like those that would see Jesus. They cannot be anything else than



skeptical as to the value of much of the moral and religious theorizing in vogue. They confess candidly that their moral earnestness and hopefulness can be warranted by no course of reasoning which they can devise or have seen, and they are unhappy enough because of it. But on one hand they are too good Greeks to pretend that an argument is good when it is not, merely because they wish it were; and on the other hand they have too much of the spirit of the proselyte to set aside the claims and the implicit prophecies of a high moral standard, because they cannot at the present vindicate them at the bar of criticism. When the pessimist asserts the worthlessness of human life, the emptiness of hopes, and the futility of human schemes, and denies that in all the universe there is or is to be a Christ, a Saviour from desolation, these modern Greek proselytes are not insensible to the force of the assertion, and do not flatter themselves that it can be successfully met by a few *ad captandum* summer-school speeches addressed to the love of comfortable sensations. They take no particular pleasure in seeing intellectual rectitude slaughtered to make a vacation holiday, and so they seem to many to love their doubts. But the fact is that they cherish a long-ing and desperate hope that, under all the shifting sands of uncertainty and error and word-faith, will be found some real and abiding truth of eternal and cheering import; and their moral instincts

draw them in the direction in which this will probably be found, if at all.

What Judaism, with its substratum of moral earnestness and hopefulness, of self-sacrifice and corporate enthusiasm, was to the Greeks endowed with soul-hunger, so the moral and the social side of Christianity is to the modern Greek proselyte. Philosophy has given him no fair promise of a Christ, of a reality to correspond with and to work out and perfect in him a triumphant manhood, percipient of and sympathetic with an Eternal Godhead. The Church, if she has had a Christ to preach, has too often obscured him by her systems and formularies concerning him, so that the Greek mind could not discern him, for the Church does not speak modern Greek. She often flouts it as a profane tongue, requires shibboleths the Greek cannot pronounce before she will begin to teach him, and then forbids his testing the Christliness of her Christ by the very spiritual faculty whose possession has made and kept him a proselyte. And so he turns pathetically away, and the Christ is hid from him.

And still in spite of all obscuration and obscurantism, the claim of Jesus of Nazareth to be the world's Christ forces its way through everything, and finds the mind and enlists the attention of every intelligent person in these days. The proselyte who had come into Judaism to seek the Christ, and then discovered that neither the scho-

lastic nor the popular conception of the Christ could much appeal to him, — that both had failed to define by essentials, to grasp the vital element of Christhood, — had still the immense advantage that he had been drawn at least geographically near to Jesus. It is true that common rumor in the mouths of both friends and enemies misrepresented Jesus. Believers in him ascribed to him the artificial character they supposed the Christ must have, and unbelievers simply denied that character. Such *a priori* tests of Christhood the proselyte would be poorly provided with. He had come into Judaism to find the Christ, not to adopt the rabbinical notions about what the Christ must be. What the Christ might be he did not pretend to know; he had a vague but invincible persuasion that if once he saw the Christ he would recognize him as the Christ, and that then, though probably not sooner, he would know what he was. Like the man blind from birth, whose eyes have been couched, and who now awaits the removal of the bandage, he feels sure that he will know the light when it appears, but he makes no pretense of an adequate theory by which he shall judge whether or not it, is the light; he must see it first. So the Greeks, both then and now, must see, and not construct, the Christ.

The Christ of ordinary conception, both popular and learned, has been too often constructed, not seen. Men went to their teachers or their text-

books, and these had gone to traditions or metaphysics, and these to mere ingenuity, to determine what sort of person a Christ must be ; and then, if they chose to call Jesus the Christ, they did it by making out that he was that sort of person. They proposed first to know the Christ by methods of their own devising, and then prove that Jesus was the Christ whom they had invented, instead of seeing Jesus as the Christ, and then learning what the Christ was, by what they saw of him. These two ways of approaching Jesus are very radically different. In the one case the man trusts his scholarship or his reason or his creed or his ecclesiastical superior to give him an abstract conception of the Christ, and then he comes to Jesus determined either to see that Christ in him, or not see anything at all. In the other case the man believes, either explicitly or without defining the fact to himself, in the Holy Spirit, and trusts that Spirit to reveal the things of Christ to him, whenever and wheresoever he comes into the presence of their concrete embodiment. Then he seeks to see Jesus, not to know whether he be a Christ of his preconceptions, but to see whether he be a Christ at all, assured that, if Jesus be a Christ, then he will know what a Christ is. And this is the true spirit of the Greek proselyte. This is why he could not take the verdict of the temple schools or of the voice of popular rumor, but sought to see Jesus. That is why in our day he

neglects the authorized treatises proving that Jesus must have been so-and-so; else he could not have been the Christ, and gives no heed at all to the loud voice of a good deal of our popular preaching, which merely echoes, a little belated, the words of these treatises, but, turning from all these, industriously seeks to see what sort of person Jesus of Nazareth actually was.

So we have two kinds of literature concerning Jesus: one endeavoring to prove that he was something, and the other seeking to discover and say just what he was. The latter, which is rapidly increasing and is destined to supplant the other, is the work of men of the type of the Greek proselyte; and its original type was suggested by the Gospel of Luke, a proselyte. In all the public libraries I have observed that the well-thumbed copies of the lives of Jesus are those written, in however unsatisfactory a manner, from the Greek standpoint; and I am sure that they were thumbed, not by truth-haters, but by truth-seekers. One may suppose that, when the Jewish doctors of divinity saw these Greeks elbowing their way through the crowds, and seeking a personal interview with Jesus, they took it as a kind of personal affront to themselves, as some of their successors regard efforts at personal investigation on the part of unordained persons to-day. "We can give you a much safer notion of this Jesus," they would say, "than any you may be able to form for yourselves. At

least, if you will insist upon personal interviews, come and let us imbue you first with certain prepossessions, which may guard you from perilous errors." And so to-day when the Greek would study Jesus for himself, he is beset by such learned dogmatists clamoring for the adoption of their preconceptions, and warning him that it is not safe to approach Jesus without first learning to speak in the sacred dialect of their school.

My sympathies are with both sides, for there is a good deal to be said on both. It will not do to ignore aspects or preconceptions, as if they did not express a vast deal of truth. It is not difficult to make a strong and honest plea for the most imperfect of the Jewish notions about the Messiah. On the other hand it is impossible not to sympathize with the Hellenists who would see Jesus, and with every morally earnest person who, throwing away preconceived notions, passing by the systems and doctrines, goes directly and seeks to know Jesus. For our gospel is that Jesus is the Christ; not that some Christ of our inventing is Jesus, but that Jesus is the Christ. If one wants a Christ let him disciple with Jesus, say we, and he will surely find one. He may not form any very symmetrical or complete idea of the Christ, — there may be reasons in himself why he will not, — but the idea he does form will have substance in it, and will be his own. It will probably be as it is in our knowledge of one another. I have German,

English, and Japanese friends. The Germans form German notions of me, I have no doubt; the English, English notions, and the Japanese, some sort of, to me inconceivable, Japanese notions. Likewise the German, the Englishman, and the Japanese, who knows Jesus, will each form his own conception of the Christ. Educated and spiritually minded Hindoos complained that English and American missionaries had been preaching in India not so much Christ Jesus as Christ Anglo-Saxon, and that this lacked adaptability to Hindoo wants. One of them proposed to go back of the Anglo-Saxon Christ to Jesus of Nazareth, and, starting therefrom, to represent to his countrymen the Oriental Christ. Whatever the performance may have been, the aim was legitimate. In Jesus each man and each nation will find that type of Christ which is best adapted to him and to it. As the Jews had a Jewish conception of Christ, so the Greeks who approached Jesus would get a Greek conception. We are sometimes narrow and intolerant about this, and are jealous of allowing others to frame notions differing from ours as their mental peculiarities differ. The remedy for narrowness is to make a virtue of encouraging every person to see Jesus for himself.

I cannot but be speaking to some who appreciate the need of a Christ, who feel the presence and persistence of sad mysteries, — the mystery of sorrow, of sin, and moral impotence. The shadows



of life fall very dark across many pathways. The world's consolations are husks, and our preaching is little or no better. They would find a Christ. Though they seem to be seeking rather languidly, it is because they have been so discouraged and have well-nigh lost heart. Yet there is present to them a half-latent desire for the eternal salvation, whatever that may be. And this is a safeguard in days of temptation, and the source of strange yearnings, which come out in spasmodic acts of self-denial or devotion. They are seekers after a Christ.

Brother seeker, I ask you not to accept my doctrine concerning the Christ. I ask you not to think my thought about him. I ask you not to feel my feeling toward him, or to serve him in the same way I do, or to say "Amen" to my prayers and praises. Your mind and mine may be so different that the Christ I seem to see might not appear to you a Christ to be loved or served. But see Jesus. Turn away from my teaching and the teaching of every philosophy and creed, and disciple with Jesus. Whatever the form of my own thought concerning Jesus, I am so fully persuaded that he is the Christ that I am willing to point all sincere souls to him in full assurance that, the more free from all preconceived opinions about him they may be, the more real and attractive will be the Christ they will find in him. Men do not know what they want of a Christ; and the more

intelligent they are, the less they can define their wants. You have a vague sense of unrest, a craving for that which will satisfy an undefined hunger, a universal discontent with self and the world, a lonesomeness, a homesickness for the Eternal. Come and see Jesus. You will see in him that which will transform your vague sense at once into a special sense; and while showing you exactly the thing that will satisfy your need, it will at the same time offer it to you.

That is our gospel — Jesus. I am preaching no theology at all to-day, although I have a theology, and should be unfit to stand in a Christian pulpit if I did not have one. I am preaching no philosophy to-day; although I believe in philosophy, and have the outlines of one, for working purposes at least. I should go insane if I were doomed to incoherence of thought. I am preaching no church to-day; I believe in the Holy Catholic Church. I am preaching no particular Christ; I have some grasp of a divine Christ-idea, but I am not preaching that, I am preaching Jesus. Upon the ignorant and weak, whose conceptions I must furnish, whose thoughts I must think for them, whose religious dictator, whose pope I must be, — upon them I may bring to bear the impress of my own type of character, and cause them to accept my interpretation of Jesus, my Christ. But to my equals or superiors in intelligence and in force and individuality of mind

and character I can only preach Jesus. The missionary realizes this. To some nations he carries his whole theology, creeds, metaphysics, and all; to others he finds he can carry less; to the strongest these things are nothing, and his only really effective message is Jesus. So to-day I speak to the strong and the thoughtful and the informed, and I have only one thing to say, and that is, See Jesus. See *him*. Bring your organized powers of perception, your scientific instruments and methods to bear. See him. Assume your dictum that no concrete knowledge comes except through observation and experience, that intuition is but most highly organized sensation, and that reason gives but empty forms. See him. Suppress the imagination, spurn idealism. He will start them up again, after he has fully vindicated himself without them. See him. Test and measure him in terms of foot-pounds, or ohms, or volts, or whatever is your newest-fangled unit of measure. See him. Insist upon coördinating him with the rest of the known and knowable universe, and mutually expressing him and it in terms of each other.

Oh, I have seen an evil under the sun, two of them, twin evils, and I never lose the chance to prophecy against them. I have seen persons of culture accept on one hand the teaching of the spirit of the age, that whatever is fact must be able to be discerned in its relations to the world of fact; and on the other hand thoughtlessly give

way to the current notion that the alleged Christhood of Jesus is proved more than in any other way by the impossibility of so placing him in relation to history. And so they turn away from him, and settle down into — I will not say a contented, but an habitual and dogged agnosticism concerning the one thing which, if apprehended, can pour their cup of life full to overbrimming, and complete their thought of an intelligible universe. That is one of these evils. And then I have seen other persons of culture make terms with their religious cravings against their mental integrity, and live double lives as if with science domesticated in one brain lobe, and piety in the other. That is an evil threatening either mental or moral wreck, or both. Now both these evils — that chill agnosticism on one hand, and this mechanical mixture of science and pietism on the other — come from a failure to penetrate into the presence of Jesus and actually see him. I plead for an earnest, sincere, industrious study of Jesus as an historical personage. He who seeks to see him will find him respond like no other character in history to the tests by which facts are discerned; and the more unrelentingly he is pursued as a fact, the more will his Christhood stand out. Our gospel is that Jesus is a Christ, — you will ask to go no further, — you will see the Christ.

I trust I may not be accused of the common sin of overdriving my text. As intimated before, I

believe that while this incident was not invented, as Strauss would say it was, yet it was remembered and related as a typical case illustrating the beginnings of that contact of the Greek mind with Jesus, whose philosophical, religious, and historical consequences have been so great. As such it is fair to press it for all it is worth. And it suggests a word to the disciples of Jesus. We, his disciples, stand between Jesus and an inquiring world. Its request to see him is addressed to us, and most of it will never see any other Jesus than it can see through us. At any rate we must introduce it to him. The world will not, if it can, and but the few can, break through the hedge of doctrinalism which has come to surround him, stereotyping the Scriptures concerning him as though in a dead tongue. We are the living epistles to be known and read of all men, and each of us is responsible for translating the life of Jesus into his own individual manhood, and living it before the world. It is not to be overlooked that these Greeks approached that one of the disciples who had a point of contact with them. From Philip's Greek name, which would not have been given without some reason, it would be right for the proselytes to infer that they might find response in him, that perhaps he spoke Greek. Likewise we, so far as can be done without transgressing the laws of symmetry, should cultivate and emphasize our individualities, especially those which will give us points of contact with

an inquiring world. Heterogeneity is the law of life. We do not want uniformity of religious type. If we are Greeks, let us be Greek Christians, and not try to conform mechanically to the Jewish pattern. If we are large-minded in other things, let us not sacrifice the advantage, and by way of conformity adopt some small or ignorant conception of the Christ. If we are practical, let us put Jesus at the centre of business. If we are emotional in daily life, loving our families and friends effusively, then let no cold propriety restrain us in our expressions of love to Jesus. Do not let accidental church connections determine wholly the fashion of our devotion. And in all our contact with the hesitating world about us, let us remember that, however contemptuous it may be of us and our notions or our church, it is uniformly respectful in reference to Jesus. That is a remarkable fact, profoundly significant of things which are about to be. What of coarse and vulgar skepticism there is, is a relic of the days of Paine, and is dying out in the atmosphere of the nineteenth century. The doubt of to-day is earnest and critical, but it is respectful. It says, "Sir, we would see Jesus." It has learned to believe in and respect the manhood of faith in Jesus and loyalty to him; and self-respectful and conscious of rectitude itself, it asks of us that we treat it with respect, and show it the basis of our belief, that if possible it may come into a like precious faith.

Finally, the modern spirit of inquiry concerning Jesus is not given to doting upon a false individualism. It has learned that true individualism is not inconsistent with the fellowship of research. It already feels the promptings of the spirit of wholeness, or holiness, and it pursues truth in company with those who are congenial with it. To borrow a metaphor from the athletic field, it does fine team-work in its efforts to win the goal of truth. This is not the age of the closet philosopher, spinning metaphysics out of himself like the solitary spider. The rounding up of facts for inductive purposes compels coöperation. Where two or three are met together in Jesus' name, his Christhood will appear. "We," men are saying, "we would see Jesus." The sense of brotherhood of soul, the universal Spirit, has melted thought together, that thus the answer to the question concerning Jesus may be given. A spirit is a corporate force. We live in the dispensation of the spirit, and the *we* who would see Jesus is the universal *we*, the mind of humanity, of which each smaller group of truth-seekers was a part and a prophecy. I have begun to look after my health, that I may, if possible, win the inestimable privilege of living through the next twenty years. Oh, what years they will be! The central figure of the world's life in the coming years will be Jesus. I do not ask you, my friend, to choose Jesus as the most important fact in your life for the next



twenty years. That is not for you to choose, any more than it is for you to choose whether the sun shall be the centre of the solar system for those two decades. There he is at the very right hand of Eternal Majesty. Behold him! The next few years are to witness such a recognition of the supreme importance of the personality of Jesus, such an exaltation and enthronement of him, as will visibly change the face of the earth. Be in it, young men and women. Get what else you can, — get a living, get wealth, get position, get office, but above all things get at the fact concerning the personality of Jesus. And in so doing you will gain an enthusiasm that will make life for you: there is no life worth living without enthusiasm. Enthusiasm, — God-intoxication is the translation of it, — enthusiasm is life; and the knowledge of Jesus alone in these days will give a permanent enthusiasm, that will not fall into fanaticism on one hand, or die out into disenchantment on the other. Let us enter into life: and this is life eternal, to know God and Jesus Christ, to be enthused, God-intoxicated, by Jesus.

## VIII.

### THE TRANSFIGURED AND TRANSFIGURING CROSS.

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. — GAL. vi. 14.

“THE cross of Jesus has in a strange way held man spellbound, and forced him to listen to its story like a child who cannot choose but hear.” It is a wondrous fascination this symbol has gained. The original cross was in itself the last thing fitted to touch the imagination, being only a post some seven or eight feet high with a peg upon which the body rested astride, having the arms nailed across the top, which formed a T. There were other shapes, but this was the common one, and all were equally unpoetic. It was the instrument for the torture of slaves and baser criminals, and was sought for Jesus by his haters because it was thought that a death so disgraceful would forever destroy any influence he might have won with the people. Their plan was “refutation by odium.” The law of Moses had provided for the hanging of the bodies of certain detested criminals, and had meant it to be equivalent to a curse; hence the saying, “Cursed is every one that hang-

eth upon a tree." Thus it was determined that all the messianic claims of Jesus should be forever silenced by heaping contumely upon him in the manner of his death. Wonderful is the irony with which the wider law of history confutes the reasonings and overthrows the schemes of those who think they understand how to control events. For Jesus did not transgress, but rather fulfilled the prophecies and necessities of the case, when he transfigured the disgrace into honor and, by hanging upon it, metamorphosed the cross into the throne and symbol of divinely human empire.

It is a mistake to say that such a transformation could never have been foreseen or foretold. Socrates had more than a glimpse of its possibility; and while the Hebrew prophets did not predict the thing itself, they did in their sublimer flights gain glimpses of the principle of it. They saw that the greatest benefactors of the race had been those whom the race cast out as unfit for a place in society; that he who fulfilled the highest law of humanity had to do it by consenting to become an outlaw, to be numbered among the transgressors, to be despised and rejected, to have men turn their faces from him. These prophecies went unheard and unheeded, and only later ages went back and saw how, under the unexampled suffering of the Captivity, some of the psalmists had vaguely guessed the great law which was fulfilled when the cross became the centre of the

moral universe and the sign of a compassionate God. The change in the significance of the cross was revolutionary, not because it contradicted the law of the nature of things, but because it brought to light a law which had been forgotten. Still, although we can now say that the cross is the formula which expresses the fundamental law of this universe of law, it is of exceeding value not only to say this, but to trace the way in which the cross of Jesus became the central object of interest to the world. It now lends its interpretation to the universe.

But how did it come to be so important a fact? It is not because of the dogmatic interpretation which has been put upon it. The cross of Jesus survived its disgrace, won its importance, became a cause of glorying, during the lifetime of the generation that saw it set up on Golgotha. The dogmas came long afterward. They were a result, and not a cause. Augustine and Anselm found the cross supreme, and invented dogmas more or less true to correspond. It may be, as some suspect, that the dogmas hindered rather than helped the extension of the sovereignty of the cross. As little was it the mere picture of physical suffering that gave the cross its power. The world was used to scenes of worse torture, and had looked unmoved upon many deaths ostensibly more tragic and heroic. Some have claimed that the elevation of the cross to its supremacy is the achievement

of the genius of the apostle Paul. It is said that a study of the life and thought of Paul reveals an unconscious combination of myth-making and dogma-making which yields all the results. Now while a knowledge of Paul is essential to a knowledge of Christianity, a better knowledge of him shows that the cross was making conquest even of the Gentile world before Paul began his work. He saw its significance more clearly than others, and his interpretation may have been to some extent written back into the history. But the evidence is abundant that Paul did not originate the glory of the cross.

Who, then, did originate it? Or was it an accident? Accidents do not happen on so great a scale as that. It was no accident, but the product of law; and it was, in accordance with law, a conscious creation of Jesus himself. With deliberate foresight and forethought Jesus took that symbol of torture and shame, and set it up as the standard of his divine royalty. It is clear that Jesus did not openly announce his personal messiahship, until he saw that there was no other method of bringing in the Christian era but for a victim to be offered.

The "egotism" of Jesus has puzzled many. But he undertook to found the kingdom of God anonymously, and would have been willing to drop into personal oblivion. Though he knew he was the Messiah, the man through whom the

kingdom of God was to come, that knowledge did not to his unselfish mind involve any personal fame, and his early ministry was aimed at the founding of a kingdom with which his name was not to be associated. He sought not glory of men. But a crisis came, when it was evident that whoever would found that kingdom must be ready, not to be glorified, but to be despised and disgraced and humiliated more than any man had ever been; he must be willing that his name should be not merely unknown, but that it should be known as a term of reproach. Then he refrained no longer, but declared that the kingdom of God was to be his personal kingdom, and he set out for Jerusalem to claim the crown of desertion, rejection, and contempt.

He was well acquainted in Jerusalem. He had visited it at least yearly since his boyhood. For him to anticipate that the chief priests would be the ones to compass his death, and that they would do it by the Roman method, required no more acumen than he displayed again and again when he had to meet and unmask their designs. It is reported that after he came to Jerusalem, he remarked, probably as he pointed from a distance to an execution in sight on the hill where he expected to suffer, and observed the crowds attracted toward it, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." He must have early endeavored to lead his disciples to see that the

natural and necessary consummation of his messianic enterprise was through disgrace and death. For the story of the transfiguration does not read like a myth, and it has every element of probability in its favor, if we assume that it followed some peculiarly intimate conversation concerning the expected death and its relation to the fulfillment of the essence of Jewish prophecy. And if the transfiguration were to be explained away, it would have to be on the basis of some parable or other, and this would equally show that Jesus was contemplating the fulfillment of his messiahship through his death. It may therefore be regarded as a settled fact that, when Jesus started on that last journey, his passion journey, he knew that his messianic claims were to be sealed with his death in the most disgraceful form.

His estimate of the meaning and dignity of his Christhood was not thereby lowered at all. He believed himself no less great; greater in truth; for we have reason to think that there came to him at that time the idea, an inference from his own conscious greatness and his confidence in his Father, that he could not remain under the power of death. Claiming to be the Christ whom the Jews expected, and as such asserting his right to universal dominion, he did not abate one jot of these claims when he resolved to die. He determined to attract all eyes to the scene of his death, to make it the central point



of interest in the world's history. And this thing which Jesus deliberately determined to do has come to pass.

If a man says he will do a thing, and it is done, the natural presumption is that he was the doer of it. If Jesus said from the first that his death would be substantially what it has been to the world, then whatever other inferences may be made, it is not an unfair inference that the reason why his death has been so important is to be found in the secret of his own personality and its relation to the world. That is to say, when Jesus of Nazareth made his will in Cæsarea Philippi, and signed and recorded it by that solemn ceremony in the upper chamber in Jerusalem some months after, — his will that his death should attract universal attention and become the turning-point of human history, — when he so willed, and the event has come out as he willed it, the inference is that Jesus knew enough what he was about, and had enough resource of power or position, or both, to accomplish it. Consequently, the main reason why the event came to pass was because he willed it to come to pass. Hence, if his death proves to be the beginning of a new world, his will is the creator of that world. You may call him God, or you may call him man, I care not. If his choice to transfigure the cross, and to use it to transfigure human life and human nature and human aspiration and human achieve-

ment, and the material universe thereby, actually did transfigure these things, or so begin the work that its completion is certain, then all I ask for him, all I need ask, is the acknowledgment of that fact and the practical consequences that flow from it.

But still there would, properly enough, remain a doubt whether the remarkable parallelism between the anticipations of Jesus concerning his death and the actual consequences of that death are not a mere coincidence. If these anticipations were only incidents of his experience, and did not belong to the characteristics of the man himself, this would be a staggering doubt. But his whole career to the minutest details hitherto has been in full harmony with the character of that anticipation. He not only foresaw death as one who knew himself to be the greatest man who had ever lived, and knew that the fate of men hinged upon him as it hinged on no one else, but he did everything consistently with that assumption concerning himself. Not to go back through his life to note this, let us observe him in the article of death, as he is to be seen from this point of view. I shall not try to paint scenes of agony, or to harrow your feelings with realistic images of the horrors of crucifixions. I could not do that if I would. It lies beyond my power. Nor would it serve our purpose. But let us inquire whether this Jesus, who, as we have said, deliberately chose the cross

as a throne from which to rule the world, when the time comes for him to ascend that throne, ascends it with the same kingly gait with which he approached it. Kingly yet human gait; for it is not asked of us that we seek to find in Jesus a non-human and hence an unintelligible Master.

We must touch but lightly upon the several scenes recorded with a view to only determining how they measure with his self-consciousness. The first of these is as he leaves the city. The men about him are brutal enough, but women bestow upon him and, womanlike, upon his mother words of pity. Sublimely forgetful of his own suffering, present and prospective, he turns to them, and, with his own heart overflowing with pity for them, bids them weep not for him but for themselves. Even then, fainting from the wounds of the scourging and the weight of the cross, he was unmindful of his own suffering and mindful only of that of others, and that not merely in an unselfish way, but with a clear breadth of messianic vision, which showed that he had not in his agony forgotten his motives and expectations. This was characteristic of the man who willed that his death should save the whole world.

The next event of significance is the refusal to take the stupefying drink, which was mercifully provided for those who suffered this death, and which partially allayed the first and acuter pains. His consciousness of the universal import of his

death made him feel that there would be an impropriety in his meeting it under the influence of a drug, and the impropriety is obvious to us all; his action here was consistent. His very silence during all the excruciating agony of the fastening to the cross is eloquent of his character.

Then there are recorded seven sayings on the cross. The critics dispute the authenticity of some of these, and it would be difficult to meet them with positive proof. But their case is weak; for if myth had been inventing, it probably would have invented something more pretentious than these. This the critics recognize, when they for the most part concede that the spirit of Jesus has spoken even in the things which they maintain to have been inventions. But if the spirit of Jesus, why not Jesus himself? No one else was so likely to speak in his spirit. If the spirit of Jesus led the myth-makers to create sayings more like him than he was himself, then the question would still remain what sort of man it was whose spirit could do such marvels. Even if the sayings were invented, therefore they are still a record of the impressions which his death produced upon the beholders, and they may therefore be treated as though they were uttered.

The first is so thoroughly characteristic of him that, if there had been no record of it, we might have been sure that it was uttered, silently at least, — “ Father, forgive them, for they know not

what they do." The next was addressed to one of the victims crucified by his side, and is entirely consistent both with the loving, self-forgetting spirit of Jesus, and with his lofty self-consciousness, whatever interpretation we may place upon that self-consciousness. Jesus must have so borne himself that this poor dying culprit felt that somehow he could depend upon him. Even the exact words he used could be accounted for, though it may be easier to suppose that here the reporters employed their own modes of conception and expression. But that Jesus, with the supreme conviction that his death was an atonement for sin, and that the future, both of this life and the next belonged to him, should have made use of the knowledge to shed a ray of hope across the departing life of his fellow-sufferer, is in the highest degree characteristic. So characteristic, indeed, is the whole scene that, when once it is suggested to us, we can hardly imagine anything but that it must have happened. Jesus could not have spent several conscious hours between two dying thieves without trying to do something for them ; and he who said to the paralytic, "Thy sins are forgiven," would not be slow to administer equally categorical relief to a poor creature who leaned upon him for hope in his last extremity.

Again characteristic is his tender solicitude for the care of his mother. With this his concern with earthly things ceases ; the clouds have cov-

ered his eyes ; the roaring of the deep waters has come up into his ears ; the world is closed to him. But Jesus was no grim Stoic, too proud for utterance when utterance is the natural expression of his situation. He does not get out of sight and touch of humanity ; and so when the last agony begins, whose accompaniment is intense thirst, he cries out, " I thirst." It is significant, because it shows that his sublime self-consciousness has not dehumanized him ; it is as natural to him as my self-consciousness is to me.

Then comes the most explicable and most inexplicable cry of all, — " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? " Some would make it that this is a protest against the length of time he was in dying. There is a second and better interpretation. The words are the first line of the 22d psalm. This psalm begins with a wail of despair, and ends with a pæan of victory. Although doubtless giving the experience of some actual sufferer and his triumph over it through faith in Jehovah, it is in truth one of the great messianic psalms. When the horror of darkness came over Jesus, nothing was more fitting than that he should express what he felt by quoting the words of this psalm. He only needed to utter the first words ; all the rest was involved ; as, when a believing soul whispers, " Jesus, Lover of my Soul," the whole hymn is implied. But along with, or rather immediately following, the experi-

ence represented in the first part of the psalm comes the reviving consolation and exaltation of the last part. The utterance of the words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" in full sincerity, brought with it the answer of God by bringing with it, through the laws of a trained and educated memory (one of God's usual ways of helping his children), the assurance of deliverance and conquest. And so the taste of death absorbed all the bitterness of it, and the drinking of it was painless and peaceful, so that with his departing breath he could softly breathe the prayer of perfect faith, — "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." Then, with his great work still before his mind and the sense that it was completed, the last words were spoken, — "It is finished."

If the Gentile centurion bore witness that he died like a son of God, he meant no metaphysical dogma; for he could not have comprehended such a thing. If *I* say he died like the Son of God, I do not necessarily mean any metaphysical dogma; though I believe such dogma cannot go beyond the truth, however it may fall short of it. I may only mean that this man, who believed and proclaimed himself to be the Jewish Christ, the head man of our race, the man who should rescue us from an evil estate and bring us into a new estate of restored divine sonship; — this man who, when he realized the fact that he could do what he had



determined to do only through his assumption of authority and exercise of power which was not less than divine in its range, assumed this authority and began to exercise this power; this man who, when he saw that he must die to succeed, willed to die and to succeed, and to make the cross his throne of universal sovereignty; this man who so believed in himself and his mission and destiny that he appropriated to himself the ancient prophecies, which described him as sitting on the right hand of God and coming in the clouds of heaven;—this man died without in any respect compromising the character he had chosen to assume for himself. If, living, he had confessed that the title Son of God was not too honorable for him, dying, he had not withdrawn or modified the confession. It was therefore by no accident or coincidence that his death marks the central point of the world's history; it is because he willed that it should, and because, whatever name you give to him, he was such a person that what he willed he executed, even to the creation of a new universe.

## IX.

### THE PRINCE OF LIFE.

#### AN EASTER SERMON.

That life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. — GAL. ii. 20.

THIS morning our senses have been ravished and our souls enraptured. The fragrance and beauty of these flowers are the creation of nature, or, speaking the language of piety, of God. The more than beauty and fragrance, the nobility and holy incense of that music are the creation of a partnership of God and man. For music, as we know it, is one of the fruits of a rejuvenation of this old world which began when a few despised men proclaimed the incredible story that a certain other man, who had died a disgraceful death, had arisen from the dead. The world was forgetting how to sing; in truth, it never had known how to sing anything but the barest unharmonized ditties of thoughtlessness. But now its spirit was broken, its voice was cracked, it was decrepit, disenchanted, it was depraved and morally impotent, entering

upon a premature and unlovely old age. It was made young, the spirit of childhood and youth reinfused in its shriveled old veins by the triumphant spread of a faith founded upon the alleged resurrection of that one man. Now no longer a mere child, but a man with the healthy heart of a child, the world has learned how to create and to sing such music as antiquity could not dream of. And these two things, the rejuvenation of the world and the faith in the resurrection of that man, belong together as cause and effect.

I see you before me to-day, your faces deeply marked with lines of care, even of anxiety, but it is a loving care and anxiety; it is not despair; I see no lines of malice. Stern purpose I see, but where the purpose is sternest, the marks also of submission are most noticeable. I see you with the countenances of children looking out through fringes of often prematurely whitened hair; and I know, when I stop to consider, that but for the faith in the resurrection of that man, no eye could to-day have looked upon so blessed a sight as the love-suffused face of this audience. The two things belong together as cause and effect. At most times it would be enough to note this fact, and, assuming the cause, to seek to intensify the effect. Remembering, however, that a faith always assumed may imperceptibly become empty of its content, or shift from its foundation, there are times when it is becoming to consider not merely the effects of the faith, but the faith itself.

We have followed the history of Jesus of Nazareth through the conditions of his origin and childhood, through the struggle which revealed to him himself and his mission. We saw him try to fulfill the work of the Jewish Messiah, whom he believed himself to be. We saw how he grew to the growing dimensions of his task until, when it appeared to need a man of God-like proportions and God-like consciousness, he became a man of such proportions and consciousness in all that pertained to the requirements of his mission. He was convinced that by no accident, nor yet by any arbitrarily executed decree, but in the fullness of time by the ripening of the race-life, there had come into his hands the destiny of a race so endowed, that the problem of its destiny was one not merely of time but of eternity. He was persuaded that all power in heaven and in earth was given to him. He might save this race if he chose. He might let it be damned. He might save it to faith unconquerable, to hope unfettered, to love unmeasured. He might let it be doomed to universal and mutual mistrust and distrust, to despair blacker than night, and hatred blacker than hell. When he chose to save the world, he himself showed the first fruits of a love unmeasured, a hope unfettered, and a faith unconquerable. For he must die, as he plainly saw. Yet the salvation of the race was to be his mission, and he would not believe that it should be any less his mission, after he had died

to accomplish it. This conviction, that the salvation of the race was to be his personal mission, took shape in a faith that he would survive death, and come again personally to complete his work.

This confidence in himself, however, was a religious confidence; it was not founded upon a worship of self, for he had resisted the temptation to allow it to generate self-worship. It coexisted with a sense of absolute and worshipping dependence upon the will of God. Jesus knew that he was not an original but a derived person; he was a son. How this sense of self-confidence could coexist without conflicting with the sense of dependence, we learn when we see the nature of his faith in God; it is the faith of a son in a father. He believed as fully in God's love as he did in his power. And so he believed in himself, not in spite of, but because of the sense of dependence. "The Father loveth the son, and hath given all things into his hand."

Jesus needed this faith in the love and power of an almighty Father when he contemplated the necessity of dying for his race; for Jesus had no other species of knowledge concerning that which lies beyond death than is common to man, and to all human sense death is the end of selfhood. Jesus' belief, therefore, that death would not end his selfhood, and that he should personally fulfill the work with which his selfhood had become identified, was directly dependent upon his faith

in the Fatherhood of Omnipotence. Yet such a faith could not define the method of its realization, and hence Jesus could not profess to know the times or the seasons for the reëstablishment of his personal relation to his race and his work for it. So long as he was alive, he administered his own work, choosing ways and means, even the way of death itself. What provisions he made for the future, he made upon the basis of such foresight as all men have. He made his will like other men, disposing of and entailing the influence of his short life and his voluntary death, so that these things and the memory of him should continue their work in the world until he came. So sober minded, so soundly reasonable was the Son of man that if, when he went out into the unknown world, even his expectation of a personal return should be swallowed up in some more comprehensive and hitherto unthinkable scheme of divine love, he would not have to feel regret because of anything left undone of that which pertains to this life. He left the world with his affairs in order; his work incomplete in the sense in which all men, who live nobly and die in the prime of life, leave their work incomplete, — only in a degree measured by the work itself and the man, and, so measured, infinitely incomplete. Jesus, then, in the unwavering conviction that he himself is to be forever personally at the head of a saved and glorified race, and with such pre-

vision of the future as a supreme self-knowledge and a supreme faith in a loving and almighty Father may give, — Jesus of Nazareth thus dies on the cross of Calvary. This is history unquestioned.

Seven weeks later, history begins again with an outburst of spiritual energy at Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost; and from that day to this without any break has gone on the spread of a movement which is placing Jesus upon the throne of human history and of human life. The sense in which Jesus is being placed upon the throne of human life is not, however, precisely the sense in which he predicted that he would ultimately reign. But if accounts can be trusted, he did predict this spiritual enthronement as a sort of interregnum, expecting that it was to be followed by something more directly personal. With that, however, we have not to do at present. Now the beginning of this reign of the spirit of Jesus is, like his death, undoubted history. Like his death it is unprecedented, but not for that reason unintelligible, because Jesus nowhere laid aside his humanity; and this spiritual reign of his is in the strictest sense in harmony with the highest laws of human nature. So that, although nothing in human history has equaled it, everything in human history except sin is akin to it, and for this reason it can extend itself, until it covers the whole territory of human life, except what sin



has preëmpted; and it will ultimately crowd out sin.

So we see that an undoubted and unprecedented, though not an unintelligible, history seems to stop on the Friday evening of Passover week, and to resume at Pentecost. But of course history does not stop; it is not in the nature of history to stop and stand still seven weeks. Moreover, when it resumes at Pentecost, it does not resume where it left off. Something or other has happened in the interval, and something or other, it is fair to presume, as unprecedented as the other parts of the history to which it forms a connecting link. Let him who thinks he understands something of the preceding and succeeding history guess what may or must have occurred during these seven weeks. Or if he is too cautious to launch a mere guess, let him at least not forget the probability of something unprecedented, while he is criticising the alleged account of what actually did take place.

The earliest written of these accounts we owe to the Apostle Paul in First Corinthians xv. Next come the brief but suggestive references in the Apocalypse of John. Then the Synoptic Gospels and Acts, and latest the Gospel of John. But although, in attempting to harmonize the details of the written accounts, their age and their relative ages are to be considered, no theory of their reliability or unreliability destroys their testi-

mony, and that of the general history of Christianity, to the fact that the disciples of Jesus alleged upon the day of Pentecost, and continued to allege throughout the early history of the church, that Jesus had arisen from the dead, and had been seen some eight or ten times by individuals, by groups or by crowds. This was the conquering war-cry of the apostles. Upon this assertion they wagered success; as when Paul at Athens ended a convincing and conciliatory speech after the method of Greek philosophy by proclaiming the resurrection, and retiring from the platform and from the city amid jeers. That challenge which Paul threw out on Mars' Hill has been redeemed, and his gospel of a risen Christ is to-day the touchstone of every world-philosophy.

We must forego at this time any attempt to analyze the various accounts purporting to represent this fact. Many efforts have been made to explain it away. Most of these have had their day, and have been abandoned, and need not even be mentioned here. The ruling theory to-day among those who would explain away these things is that the appearances were visions, the fruits of enthusiasm or ecstasy. There is something about the stories which suggests the visionary, and on first sight a skeptical reader would readily decide that this accounted for them. But a more attentive consideration shows that they cannot be classed with common visions. Some of the essen-

tial conditions of enthusiasm or ecstasy are persistently absent. Moreover, the disciples themselves were subject to visions, and believed in their reality, yet they clearly distinguish between these appearances of Jesus and what they called visions. The women at the sepulchre were said to have had a vision of angels, but when Jesus appeared this was a different sort of phenomenon. The early church was full of visions, and visions of Jesus were frequent. But for some reason the first eight or ten appearances before Pentecost were always kept in a class by themselves, except that Paul, who frequently had visions, claimed that one of these was different from the rest, and belonged to the same class with the few earlier ones. Yet this claim Paul could never get more than half recognized.

This distinction between the first few appearances of the risen Jesus and the thousands of visions seen is so strongly, and yet so unconsciously and naïvely drawn, that it can have been neither an accident nor an invention. While these appearances have something of the vision in them, they have also a very positive element which does not belong to the vision, and the testimony to this survives in the accounts after skeptical criticism has done all it honestly can do. This element in such alleged visions is unprecedented, and the contradictions and inconsistencies in the representation of this, at least in

the earlier accounts, are not more than might be expected in the effort to tell of an unprecedented thing.

Now it is to be observed that it seems to have been the unprecedented element in these appearances which gave to them their peculiar power over the disciples. Although these disciples were subject to visions and believed in them, their practical mental and moral equipoise was such as to prevent their being betrayed by them, as the day-dreams of a healthy child do not prevent his living a sound objective life. The vision came and went, and left them the same men they were. These appearances of Jesus were facts to them, and produced the same sort of effect upon their lives that facts could do. We know that they lacked the critical acumen to distinguish visions from facts, but we know that they did not lack the practical instinct. Everywhere else in their lives their practical instinct stood by them. Here in the exercise of their practical instinct they treated the appearances of Jesus as facts; that is, as though the unprecedented element which distinguished them from visions was an objective element.

Not only, therefore, did the history before and after lead us to expect that something unprecedented would occur, but the alleged accounts, even in spite of all that skeptical criticism can do with them, bear testimony that something unprecedented did occur.

Another question now presents itself, Do the alleged accounts or the history bear testimony, and is it concurrent testimony, to the nature of the unprecedented element? The one persistent thing in the testimony, the one thing which will not be explained away is, that Jesus appeared objectively to them. He had a strange appearance, so that the term "body" could not be applied to him in quite the current sense, but all the marks of personal identity were there when demanded. Many details of the testimony are conflicting and wavering, so that they cannot be accepted by one to whom belief involves the necessity of forming coherent and consecutive mental images. But they do not conflict or waver upon the one point that, when Jesus appeared, howsoever he got there, he gave sufficient proof that it was he, and not his ghost, who was there. It is to be remembered that to these disciples the personality was inseparably associated with what we call the body, and what they called the spirit was a mere shadow of the man himself. We have succeeded, or imagine, rightly or wrongly, that we have, in dissociating the idea of personality from the body, and allying it with a supposed separable soul or spirit. Remembering that the disciples had not performed this feat, it was inconceivable that Jesus himself in his proper person should appear otherwise than as Jesus in the body. Hence the essence of the testimony to his bodily appearance is that Jesus,

as real and undeniable a person as he was in life, and the same person, appeared to them.

How about the requirements of the historical situation? It is an interval between the supremacy of Jesus as the living Master, and the wholly equal and equally personal supremacy of Jesus as the glorified Lord, the source of the new spirit. In both cases it is a sovereignty of love and greatness. But there is a difference: the one is the sovereignty of the man himself, the other is that of the man represented fully and adequately by the spirit which proceeded from him. We may be sure, then, that in the interval the one thing which persisted was Jesus, sovereign by virtue of greatness and love. There are only two conceivable ways for Jesus to maintain that supremacy on earth: one is the way in which he maintained it before his death, the other the way he maintains it since Pentecost. But here is an interval when we know he maintained it in neither of these two conceivable ways, yet he maintained it. He must, then, have maintained it in some way inconceivable; and what is inconceivable, yet real, gives birth to a set of inconsistent and disjointed experiences, combining the character of visions with that of perception, alternating a stunned half-sensibility with a surprised supersensibility. It is to be presumed, upon the basis of the historical situation, that something like this occurred during that interregnum.

That is precisely what the stories say occurred. Most of the time the disciples were, according to their own account, in a half-dazed condition, going about mechanically as though the anterior brain-lobes had been removed; gradually from habit and necessity drifting back into their old occupations. But every now and then the Master, whose supremacy was only asleep, and who had actually come to take the place of their higher brain-lobes, and to be the coördinating principle of their lives, — this Master was from time to time present as really as ever in life, though in a different and elusive form. If we say that the form was determined by subjective conditions, we are only saying in scientific language what has always been said, when it was explained that Jesus had control over the appearance of his resurrection body, and adapted it to the conditions of their recognition.

It will be said, however, that if Jesus appeared in this way, in forms determined, like those of visions, by subjective conditions, we are back upon the basis of the theory of visions; that the influence of Jesus persisted and produced occasional illusions in the minds of the disciples, until at length it culminated in the Pentecostal effusion.

Here we come to the point where it must be admitted that the belief in the actual appearance of Jesus after death, as distinguished from a mere vision of him, must forever be the one esoteric faith; the faith of the disciples of Jesus, and not



of others. It is significant, and a testimony to the truthfulness of the narratives, that Jesus is never said to have appeared to any but his disciples, those already in sympathy ; only in the exceptional case of Paul, and there antipathy combined with a state of spiritual equilibrium served much the same purpose as sympathy. If the difference between disciples of Jesus and others is as radical as it has always been preached to be, then the fact that Jesus appeared only to disciples rather stands in the way of convincing others of his resurrection until they have first become his disciples. Let us ask ourselves what discipleship with Jesus does and does not mean, and why, if a thing be true, it can be known to be true only by disciples of his.

In the first place, true discipleship with Jesus does not mean a surrender of any of the rights of judgment, a benumbing of any of the sensibilities, a weakening of the will, a belittlement of the man in any way. It simply means the free and intelligent choice of Jesus as the best guide to life and thought, — guide, not dictator. It means obedience in the things where obedience commends itself to the highest reason. So discipleship begins. But as discipleship goes on, it comes to a point where it must either stop or accept Jesus as the Christ. Jesus cannot always continue in the position of a Socrates or a Marcus Aurelius ; he must become the Christ to us, or we must turn back. Some day he will lead us off to the boundaries of

our little world, testing our fidelity as we follow him; and then turning sharply upon us he will demand, "Who say ye that I am?" And unless we answer that he is the Christ, the son of the Eternal, he will dismiss us from his company. But what is a Christ? A Christ is the universe of reality in an individual form, in a human personage. The Christ-fact in the world's history is that fact in the apprehension of which we apprehend the heart of the Eternal Mystery; in obeying which we obey the promptings of the Eternal; in trusting which we trust the Eternal. For ages this Christ-fact, this answer to the problem of the universe, had been evolving itself out of the chaos of the phenomenal world, which was groaning and travailing, waiting to bring forth in the fullness of time the Son, — the eternally begotten. If Jesus was, as without question he believed himself to be, that eternally begotten Christ-fruit, then to him who apprehends that, the whole complexion of the universe changes. Jesus becomes henceforth the supreme reality, and everything else becomes only relatively real; whatever is essential to the reality of Jesus becomes essentially real; and whatever is only incidental to the reality of Jesus becomes only incidentally real. Where the essential reality of Jesus is concerned, the vision becomes essentially real.

Therefore if Jesus is, as we say, the Christ, the posthumous relation of Jesus to the world is dif-

ferent from that of every other man. If we believe that he is the Christ, we cannot maintain that belief except on the basis of a faith that he still lives, and bears a relation to the world, not simply in his posthumous influence, but in his proper person. We cannot hold him to be the Christ without loving him and trusting his love; but what love or trust can there be to a posthumous influence? We are not the lovers of the dead, but of the living: love is the highest and supremest interrelation of the living with the living. We are prepared, with Peter at Pentecost, to stand up and declare that the resurrection is an *a priori* necessity, — “Whom God hath raised up,” said Peter, “because it was not possible that he could be holden of death.” If he was the Christ, — and Peter was willing to stake everything, even the evidence of his senses, even the reality of the external world upon it, — if he was the Christ, it was not possible that he should be holden of death. “Whom God hath raised up.” Jesus himself knew that that which lay beyond death must be left to God, and we may do the same, — only premising that, even if the appearances of Jesus are explainable according to the laws of psychology, they are not less God’s work, and the fact need not contradict the assertion of their objective validity.

It is at this very point where the issue must be settled, whether this universe in which we live

is a universe of atoms or a universe of persons: whether persons, we ourselves, and those whom we love and believe in and hope for, are only the products of atomic development, and not able to survive atomic disintegration; or whether we, you and I, our mothers and our fathers, our brothers and our sisters, our wives and husbands and children and lovers, are real and persistent, and the atomic world a mere phenomenon. For death we know to be a supreme event in the atomic world. If that is the real world, then death is the supreme event, the end of all existence. But love and faith and hope cannot consent to have death the supreme event. If, therefore, the supreme reality is the atomic world, men must curse it in the name of love and faith and hope. If, however, Jesus be the Christ, then he stands for the supreme reality, and he stands for it in the name of love and faith and hope; in the name of home, of parents, of brothers and sisters and wives and children and lovers; he champions them all. When he goes to meet death, the champion of the atomic world, he wears their favors and does battle for them; and if he falls, down go they all. We are not men, then, we are things, chattels, slaves of a heartless, a loveless, a hopeless despot; let us not form homes, for the auction-block of death will disperse them forever; let us not cherish hopes, for they will only leave an aching void. But, but, — if Jesus, the Christ, the representative of our

race, be stronger than death, then we build love and hope and faith on the eternal foundations.

Friends, I am bound to say, as an honest man, that the proof of the resurrection, so far as the mere direct testimony goes, is only sufficient to give a choice of alternatives. There is good evidence of an empty grave; but how it was emptied, — an empty grave is an empty grave, — that is all. He is not here, — and here, therefore, my faith cannot rest.

There is satisfactory evidence that the disciples believed that they saw him, — and all that. The evidence hangs with the probabilities and improbabilities even in the balance, to be decided according to my choice or rejection of Jesus as my supreme reality. I justify my right to choose at this parting of the roads. If I do not choose, still the grave is empty, — the whole world of heaven and earth is a grave, and it is all empty — empty — empty. If I choose him as the Christ, I acclaim that “God hath raised him up, because it was not possible that he should be holden of death,” and the same faith which proclaims his invincibility declares my own, and that of all who are my world to me. I am a free man now, I live with the eternities in range. He that believeth shall not make haste. I take time to build my life as it should be built. Death may come to-day; it may delay half a century, — I live all the same, for death is now to me an incident. I have given the lie to

the supreme affirmation of the physical world. Now I can cherish love, — I can found a home, — I can conceive great plans. Die and leave them? No; I shall sleep a hundred times, but wake to carry forward my plans. I have faith that the man I call the Christ is a living man. Hence the Being beyond and above all, the Inscrutable One, is a living God. I, who through fear of death would have been all my lifetime subject to bondage, have now put aside the fear of death, and now I live, — I live by faith in the Son of God, who died for us and rose again, that whether living or dying we should be with him.

## X.

### THE ENTHRONEMENT OF JESUS.

That same Jesus. — ACTS ii. 32.

THAT which was spoken by the prophet Joel, and quoted by the apostle from whose epochal speech these two words are borrowed, was one only of the changes which were rung upon the same theme by every prophetic voice of a creation that had been groaning and travailing in prophetic pangs. Every messenger of hope has declared that the low level, the sluggish humdrum of life, is abnormal, and that in the last hastening days a new impulse shall be imparted, and men and women and little children shall wake to healthier activities upon higher planes, and to keener relish of the diviner privileges of humanity; that under this better stimulus young men and old, boys and girls, high and low, shall, in their own several ways, discern the deeper issues and the profounder realities, speak the soberer truths, and drink the more satisfying and exhaustless joys. And the prophetic soul of the world has also dreamed that this new potency can work nothing short of a revolution in a social and religious world which is ad-



justed to a lower and retrograde ideal. That which shall come to pass cannot be less momentous than would be a reconstruction of the planetary system, a tilting of the plane of the ecliptic, a change in the elevation and contour of the continents, an alteration in the constitution of the atmosphere ; it shall be as though there were wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath, the sun turned to darkness and the moon to blood before that great and notable day of the Lord. The sum of all the messages of the men of vision, Hebrew and non-Hebrew, is that some such revolution must come, involving either as cause, or effect, or both, a new manhood and womanhood, and ushered in by some hero of redemption, some Messiah or new-Creator who should set regenerating potencies to work.

Men and women of this generation, be this known unto you and hearken unto these words : Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, accredited as the agent of supreme creative power by the signal way in which he has gathered the reins of power into his hands, being by the irresistible moral necessities, the logical, poetic, dramatic, historical necessities of the case, delivered into the power of the established order, and by that order with wicked hands, and yet in obedience to its own strongest instincts of self-preservation, crucified and slain, — this Jesus hath God raised up, and made both Lord and Messiah.

The old world had come to the crisis of supreme success or failure. Successive civilizations had been rising and falling more times than is recorded; but never had there been in existence less than two at once. Now, one had reached its full growth, which, while of the same order as the others, had, in addition, the evident quality of finality. It was the blossom on the tip of the stem. Time has made clear to ordinary minds what prophetic eyes saw then, that Rome had made such conquest of the world that she was threatened with the dearth of a successor; that unless some refructifying power should appear, her plainly impending downfall would leave no elements from which a new civilization could arise, and the world would be left a parched desert or a noisome jungle. Rome was to be to the future a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death; the only hope that it would be of life was that she should be conquered by some power which could infuse into her, and into the world through her, a new vitality, a regenerative force. Hope, which had so endeared herself to men as to make a gospel of the legend of Pandora's box of troubles, was fading away. The glow, which had long ago vanished from the faces of the dull millions in the farther Orient, was dying out among those who until now had kept a greener life about the famed shores of the Mediterranean. The thirsty sands of disenchantment were rapidly encroaching upon the fertile soil and flowing fountains of youth.

Only the "Hope of Israel" survived, a forlorn hope enough, but all there was, and with a promise if it could get itself fulfilled. The leader of that forlorn hope could be none other than the heir to the throne of David, the throne of a civilization whose creative idea had from the start been the hope of the world's redemption. He who could climb that throne, and seize that sceptre, and realize the imperial ambition of which it was the symbol, could change the tide of history, and lay the foundations of an empire of redemption which would turn men back from the borders of despair, and raise them to be kings and priests unto the Most High.

It was not only the hope, however, the promise and idea of redemption, which had survived. The redemptive civilization itself had a real though as yet an imperfectly developed existence. The Hebrew empire was as genuine of its kind as the Roman, and it was of as genuine a kind. The throne of David was as real a throne as that of the Cæsars; the Messianic potentiality was as tangible a thing, to those who had the right sensitiveness of touch, as the Roman dominion. The man of destiny, therefore, need not appear as a freak of nature, to be explained by a *deus ex machina*, but as the ripe fruitage of a living historical movement, which had never before failed to bring forth its hero in the nick of time, and which might be expected to obey its own law, and consummate itself by giving birth to a Messiah. The pious remnant,

therefore, who looked for redemption in Israel, were not mere mystics and visionaries ; but with true, even scientific insight they built their faith upon a firm historical basis. It was not asked of faith then, and it never has been fairly asked of it, that it make a virtue of being indifferent to such a foundation.

Though a fruit of history in as full a sense as it is possible for any man with a free will to be, and though manifestly chosen of the Inscrutable, none the less was Jesus the self-elected heir to the throne of David. Splendid to the verge of madness was the self-assertion of the young peasant, with his provincial garb and brogue, who set out to make himself master of the world's destinies by taking upon himself the office of the Hebrew Messiahship. It cannot indeed be called unexampled, except in degree ; for in this also he was intensely human, and followed precedents of which history is full. Neither was he, though a peasant, an uneducated man. He had that education, a better than which can scarcely be given to a youth even now, perfect familiarity with the Hebrew Scriptures, an education which forbade the narrow mind or the limited vision, an education which could not but map out an empire in his brain.

Yet, though thus equipped, Jesus could not at the start foresee clearly the whole path upon which he had entered. He knew that his foresight, as any man's must be, was limited ; but he had the

full courage of his insight and instinct, and the event has justified that courage. On the day when he stopped at the boundary near Cæsarea Philippi, and determined not to cross it to go to the Dispersion or to the Gentiles, but to return to Jerusalem, and make his crown of thorns and his throne of the cross, he made a choice upon which henceforth turned the hinges of eternity, a choice worthy of a God, and of such a God as the world had hardly yet dreamed about.

It is always to be remembered, and recalled as often as forgotten, that Jesus did not abate one jot of his princely claims when he took a step which he knew would lead to an ignominious death. The passion journey was a royal progress. The halo of the transfiguration nowhere quite fades, though it sometimes seems to render more visible the cloud of gloom that settled darker and denser. He marched on in solemn majesty before the awe-struck disciples, who were only dragged heavy-footed behind him by the chain of a despairing loyalty. His own choice drew aside sometimes the curtain of darkness, as when he planned the Palm Sunday procession, as an innocent ruse by which he might enter the royal city in the only guise in which he could consistently enter it, — as a King. Then, though his followers lost the meaning of it again, he did not ; for as he stood on the slope of Olivet and saw on some other knoll — probably that upon which afterward his own cross

stood — the idle crowds attracted toward the scene of execution, he said with sure prescience, “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” He did not pretend to know how this would be, or when. To him also, as to other men, the gates through which he was to pass were opaque. Times and seasons were in the Father’s hands, and he did not pretend to understand them. But his magnificent confidence in his Father and himself permitted him to affirm, that not only would death not put a period to his Messianic triumph, but that it should itself become a means to that triumph, that he should lead captivity captive. And so he had gathered together his little group of followers, and made his will, and signed and sealed it in a significant ceremony, bequeathing not only his life, but his disgrace and death as a priceless and redeeming legacy to his race. Said some one of a brilliant military movement, “It was magnificent, but it was not war.” This disposition which Jesus made of his death was magnificent, and it was war. It was a stroke which broke the serried ranks of hell, for he made a breach through which the forces of salvation have poured resistlessly. And so the conspiracy of the established order, to bury his Messianic pretensions out of sight in contumely, had come to naught. The cross was transfigured till it shone with a light which attracted all eyes; and presently all roads began to lead that way.

But that to which attention is directed by our text is, that he who thus laid down his life has himself taken it again. That same Jesus reappears and persists. His personality, instead of being merged in the cause, like that of other martyrs, or enduring only in the form of a posthumous influence, a name, reappears after a little, and persists and enters into human affairs in a manner most unique. We must not attempt here to say how this is, or to draw any picture, or weave any argument to show how intelligible or conceivable or credible may have been the alleged occurrences of that Easter morning. It is a proper thing to do, though he who attempts it will soon be made to feel that he has undertaken too much.

Let us pass by the initial steps to the rehabilitation of the personal Jesus as a factor in the lives of the few disciples, and rather observe that "that same Jesus" persists in history and in contemporary life. Through these unpromising disciples a new power bursts forth, clearing at first a little space, then reaching out and bringing to its service some of the greatest men who have lived. It conquers and bends to its purposes Greek thought and Roman administrative genius, until in a few centuries it has become the one redeeming element through which the old world can perpetuate itself and influence modern times. It brought forth institutions and constitutions, literatures and phi-



losophies, and dogmas and systems. When the northern heirs of the future climbed the southern wall of the Alps to seize their inheritance, they found little worth carrying away which was not the creation or the salvage of that same Jesus who had been crucified. It was through him that, when they put to their lips the chalice of Rome, they drank more health than poison.

It was his personal work. In whatever his personality held direct sway Christianity was strong and healthful; in whatever case ecclesiastical or other organizations, theological dogmas, philosophical systems, or anything else displaced the personal Jesus, it became unutterably weak; so that that kingdom of redemption which has steadily grown in greatness is the personal empire of that same Jesus, until to-day he is exalted, — I do not say that he ought to be, I simply say that he is exalted, — to-day to the right hand of the Supreme Majesty on high. It is neither exaggeration nor irreverence to say that his power over the feelings, the thought, the destinies, of men is equal to that of a God, and the potency of his kingdom is equal to and identical with whatever may most fittingly be called the kingdom of God, and his name has grown to be synonymous with that of the Hebrew Jehovah, whom the whole world admits to be the God most nobly conceived, — in fact, Jesus shares the throne of God. I bid you mark it. Philosophy and theology, dogma-

tism and metaphysics all aside, it is the most vital and urgently significant fact of contemporary life and history that that same Jesus, who was crucified, sits in a place not lower than at the right hand of the Eternal Majesty, that he has become the one mediator between an Inscrutable Godhead and a fallen but divine manhood, and that no other name is any longer mentioned under heaven among men, as that by which they can be saved. His position as the Mediator, the one Redeemer, the vicegerent of God, the eternally begotten Son of the Eternal Father, asks no other vindication; it is a *de facto* position. There he is!

“That same Jesus,” then, whom the Inscrutable has raised up to be both Lord and Christ, permitting him to absorb his own specific title as the God of the Messianic nation; “that same Jesus,” who has grown into so intimate union with all pious hopes and all guilty fears, that they subsist no longer apart from the thought of him; “that same Jesus,” with whom every oppressor of the weak, every defrauder of the ignorant, every seducer of the frail, must reckon as with a big elder brother; “that same Jesus,” is the most potent single factor in all modern history; he is the most real, tangible, influential, and actually live man in this nation to-day. It is saying a good deal, but it is true, that he will have more to do than any other one man with the next election; he is the most vital and urgent fact in the cor-

porate and the individual lives of us all and each.

Now that same Jesus as the chief contemporary fact cannot fail to lead the thoughtful mind to ponder upon its relation to the supreme truth, for every fact has its import in the scheme of truth. We can hardly rest in fact, though in this age of science that is what we first aim at. But we would go on to the truth, greater than fact, which by it is signified. Before I begin to contemplate Jesus, I am bound to think of truth as in all its dimensions greater and broader and higher and deeper than fact, fact being created and truth belonging to the Creator. But as I look upon Jesus, and the longer I look, the more it grows and grows upon me, as it grew upon the apostle Paul in his later days, while he sat in prison writing to his beloved fellow-disciples and spiritual children, and as it grew too upon the aged John, — that Jesus has gathered to himself and personified and identified with himself forever a fact which transcends and antedates creation: that he is “the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation,” in whom were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, and he is before all things and in him all things consist, that in all things he might have the preëminence, since it hath pleased the Inscrutable Source that

in him should all fullness dwell, since he has been raised from the dead and set at God's own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come, and all things have been put under his feet.

But when I turn upon myself, and try to realize the dimensions to which Jesus has thus grown in my thought, I am astounded. I have gone beyond my depth, — and yet am not drowned; I bathe in and am buoyed up by this divine fact, I drink deep of it as of a river of truth. It is the elixir of life. I care no longer for metaphysics, because I have a physics which goes as far as metaphysics ever projected itself. I find God manifest in flesh; and then I remember that Jesus, with his splendid daring, once said, "I am the truth:" fact and truth in him are one, — it is the living mystery of the incarnate God.

I can never again be the man I was before I gained a glimpse of this worshipful mystery: I am changed by it for better or for worse. Every time the glimpse is repeated a new access of change for better or for worse comes to me, whether I will or not; it is a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. If Jesus be a fact of such transcendent proportions in my inner and my outer world, then unless I live as though he were, I am living a life which is out of harmony with acknowledged reali-

ties. Men of the world talk a good deal of the inconsistency and hypocrisy of the followers of Jesus. But few of these same men of the world could conscientiously deny that Jesus is the supreme fact in human life, yet they live as though he were a trifle, represented, it may be, by one half of one per cent. of their interest in their investments in life. To know that Jesus is the chief fact, and to live as though he were not, is to live a plain falsehood. "Who is a hypocrite," exclaims the apostle John, "who is a liar, but he that ignor-eth the lordship of Jesus?" No; if I believe that "that same Jesus" who was crucified is to-day both Lord and Messiah in the world in which I live, whatever theory or want of theory I may have as to how he came to hold such a position, I am bound, on pain of the charge of hypocrisy and falsehood, to acknowledge him in the adjustment of all my relationships; and I have no more any business to pose, as I may have been doing, as a man of honor and integrity, until I have begun in sincerity to obey that truth. My conscience must either be silenced to my awful detriment, or it must accuse and condemn and despise me, until I adjust myself to this prime fact of life. This was the crux of the situation of Saul of Tarsus before his sudden conversion. This is the prick against which you self-righteous men of the world are kicking.

It is not possible for one to recognize the im-

portance of the relationship which Jesus sustains to human life as it is to-day, without admitting that he will one day be compelled to reckon with it in judgment; so that we sing with sincerity in the *Te Deum*, "We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge." Yet the original Jesus of Nazareth justly described his attitude toward men when he said that he had not come to condemn the world but to save it, and he rightly pictured himself as judging and condemning or approving men only as one of the incidents to his work as a Saviour, making common cause with the weak and unfortunate and fallen. And "that same Jesus," who thus represented himself as primarily a Redeemer, holds the same attitude toward the world to-day as he did then; he is the same Jesus. So true is this, that the consciences of most of us respond to the suggestion of the apostle Peter, who thought the most heinous charge which could be brought against men at the judgment to be that they had despised and trifled with the solicitations of a would-be Saviour. We examine all the saving traits in ourselves and our environments, and we see that they are either his original creation, or that they have been absorbed and are being preserved by him. A pious mother, or one whose inherited qualities once grew in the soil of piety, is a good part of the store of saving grace to many, — and the lineage of that kind of motherhood is well known. Through institutions and literatures

created or preserved by him the atmosphere we breathe has been saturated with moral healthfulness that braces us within and without. Whatever we are that is good or praiseworthy, we owe to that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. Who would willingly allow to be lost out of his character all that graciousness and that fineness of fibre which is owing to Jesus, to have the savingness of Jesus eliminated from him? Not one would dare to choose it. Yet many will let it come gradually by the neglect of so great salvation. Neither would any quite dare to enter consciously upon a course which was expected to eventuate in emancipation from the redeeming power of Jesus as it exists and acts in his environment. Yet such emancipation must be possible; it lies in the nature of the relationships of free personalities. We also are sons of God, with sovereignties upon which Jesus himself, as God's vicegerent, upon which God himself, cannot infringe. Even Jesus the supreme Saviour cannot remain in us or about us indefinitely as an unbidden guest.

But while the presence of this Jesus is the supreme saving fact to him to whom he is present, in equal measure is his absence the most momentous fact to him to whom he must be absent; so that, whether present or absent, he is the supreme fact to every human life. Our attitude toward this fact cannot change its dimensions, for it is objective, and as independent of us as the existence



and dimensions of the sun. Our difference of attitude can only change the nature of its effect upon us : that effect is equally momentous whether for condemnation or for redemption. This is a faithful saying and worthy to be kept in continual remembrance.

But finally, let us observe that not only is the sum of all that is saving in us and about us to be ascribed to that same Jesus who was crucified, but that in him there is a salvation even to the uttermost. He is a saving fact of absolutely fundamental import. He is the cardinal fact for the interpretation of the deep questions which obtrude themselves upon us, whether we will or no. We must from time to time touch and confront eternal realities ; and when we do, we find him there, so that we see the fitness of his appellation as the Son of the Eternal. The mission of love takes us into the presence of these realities when it bids us go with the loved one until pushed back by the inexorable separating hand of death, and as we peer into the utter darkness we are made to feel that we have an infinite stake in eternity. Then, if never before, we send for some fellow-man, or, possibly with a touch of superstition, for one who claims some preterhuman priestly unction, to stand, by the cold clay and utter a taunt of defiance to the great enemy, — “ O grave, where is thy victory ! O death, where is thy sting ! Thanks be unto the Eternal through our Lord Jesus Christ,” — and

then to turn to us with the cheering, "Wherefore, beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the fullness of life, forasmuch as ye know that the Eternal is not the God of the dead but of the living." Such words testify, upon the authority of a faith more or less explicit, that that same Jesus who entered the portals of death and descended into Hades has done so only that he might the more certainly and triumphantly ascend into the heights of heaven, that he has won the victory of life, and that because he lives, we and ours, those same loved ones, shall live also. Thus we acknowledge the power of his resurrection.

## XI.

### JESUS, TEACHER AND LORD.

To whom coming as unto a living stone. — 1 PETER ii. 4.

ALTHOUGH the evangelical historians took no special pains to report the sayings and doings of Jesus in the precise order in which they occurred, yet enough of the outlines of that order are clear to show that he gave a fair trial to the plan of saving men and restoring manhood by winning them over to his ideas, before he undertook the bolder and more regal method of binding them to himself, and building them into himself and himself into them. His first scheme was to make them a gift of his idea, the idea of the divine fatherhood and of God's parental kingdom, and to cause them to feel its saving force. His riper plan, the product of experience, was to make a gift of himself to men and for them, to identify himself with them in their failures and successes, and thus to cause them to bow to the authority of his own person. Beginning as a teacher, a prophet, he found it impracticable to complete his work until he also became a priest and a king, and in the fulfillment of these three functions he

entered into the fullest possible relations of solidarity with the race.

It is here that many men, certain whole sects of men, indeed, who would be his followers, part company with him or with his biographers. Some of them admit that the authors of the Gospels are correct in saying that at a certain point he turned aside from the path of a prophet, which his great forerunner had trod, and in which he had followed till then, and consciously took up a priestly and a royal mission.

But they think that when he did it he made the mistake of his life; that it is the fly in the ointment which spoils all. Some such opinion was held by Renan, that, at the time when he began to put his personality into his work and attract attention to it, he took leave of his better self and became henceforth a mixture of fanatic and pretender; that if he had had the moral equipoise to carry himself along to the end on the plane of a rabbi, his whole career would have been more of a success. Yet even those persons who believe that his true mission was only to teach, and that he committed a serious blunder when he exceeded that function, still maintain that as a teacher he is unsurpassed, and that the force of his teaching is not impaired by what they regard as his own inconsistency; that the world owes to him the ideas which he imparted to it during his earlier ministry, and that these are saving ideas.

The more common attribute, however, of those who would call Jesus rabbi, but not Lord, who would use him, but not identify themselves with him, is to charge the error to his biographers or his apostles, rather than to himself, and to say that where it is asserted that he claimed a personal supremacy, there the legendary begins. That he preached the Sermon on the Mount they agree. They deny that he ever said, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me," or "I and my Father are one," or "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth," or "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." These sayings appear to them to be but embellishments of the story of his life. The idea of his exaltation to the right hand of power seems to have originated with the apostolic chronicler, and not with himself. This determination to make out that either Jesus himself or his disciples were mistaken in claiming for him any other place than that of a teacher was the work of what was known in this country, one or two generations ago, as the liberal movement.

Its contention was, that if we could break through the crust of the traditional and dogmatic view of Jesus, it would be found, on an unbiased investigation of the facts, that he actually stands to humanity, not as its king, not as its priest, but simply as its most perfect prophet or teacher ;

that he is not the shepherd of men, putting forth his sheep and then going before them, but the preacher putting forth his ideas. And they believe that if the matter were made the subject of free inquiry, this would be the verdict. They therefore became the champions of free thought and critical inquiry; and those to whom the lordship of Jesus was a precious faith were betrayed thereby into becoming the opponents of such freedom of inquiry. In that way the notion that Jesus was nothing more than the world's greatest teacher became associated in most minds with the important right of liberty of thought, while the doctrine that he was far more closely identified with humanity as its Redeemer and Lord was supposed to depend upon the repression of thought.

This was a tragedy of errors. The people who cried out most loudly for freedom of inquiry seldom took the pains to exercise that freedom, but assumed, without inquiry, that they knew what would be the result of it, and boldly announced as the product of free inquiry what had never been made the subject of adequate inquiry of any kind. And on the other hand, those who were frightened into obstructing investigation were needlessly alarmed. For when at length a few, without advertising their demand for liberty, took occasion to inquire, with full abandon, into the facts, it began to appear that Jesus' position as the Saviour and King of men would bear

investigation as fully as his position as the teacher of men. And so the negations of the old liberal party are denied, and the affirmations of the old conservative party are reinforced, by the actual exercise of the right of critical investigation, which the former demanded and the latter refused. No man has a right to-day to call himself a liberal, that is, an advocate of freedom of inquiry, simply because he happens to deny the lordship of Jesus; and no man who affirms that lordship is, for that reason, open to the accusation of not having exercised full freedom of inquiry. The doctrinal issues between liberalism and conservatism have wholly changed in these last days.

Actually, to-day, the fact that Jesus has both claimed and gained the position of supereminence in the world's affairs as a personal factor is to be affirmed on the basis of the severest and freest historical criticism. Historical science calls Jesus Lord; and if it be true, as the apostle says, that no man can call Jesus "Lord" but by the Holy Ghost, then historical science is to be reckoned as one of the instruments of the Holy Spirit. It is true that this science utters no dictum as to his right to be the world's Lord. It only declares that he is its Lord. The verdict of history concerns his *de facto*, not his *de jure* lordship. Whether he ought to be or not, he is identified with this world for its salvation or its perdition.



It is learned, even upon a closer examination, that there is such a consistency between Jesus' teachings and his lordship, that one who looks carefully into it is compelled to confess, as men are reported to have confessed at the time of the Sermon on the Mount, that his teaching is astonishingly unlike that of scribes; that, in fact, he taught as one having authority; so that it is not possible for one to be logical who elevates him to a supreme place as teacher, without at the same time, either openly or tacitly, acknowledging him as Lord.

So clear is this becoming that, among those who have been exalting him as teacher but declining to exalt him as Lord, a schism has come. One goes back and refuses any longer to acknowledge his uniqueness or supremacy as a teacher, and the other goes far forward toward the enthronement of him as Lord. One turns away from him as teacher because he cannot otherwise avoid bowing to his kingship; the other accepts the logic of the situation and crowns him king.

In thus putting his own person at the head of the movement for the redemption of men, and making loyalty to his person the condition of membership in a redeemed society, Jesus acted in obedience both to the laws of human nature in general, and to the particular laws of that course of history which it was his peculiar mission to bring to its culmination. More and more

does a knowledge of human nature impress the truth that, if manhood is ever redeemed and replaced in its rightful position in relation to nature, to God, and to itself, it will be not by education alone, but also by a reconciliation which shall break the spell of alienation, and by a leadership which shall hold the loyalty of its will. The teacher and the priest will be also the educator, but he will have to rule and mediate in order that he may educate.

The world's Moseses have not waited to educate the slaves they would redeem from bondage. They have won them and led them out of Egypt, — ugly, motley, ignorant herds, — and have started them on an educational march, and have died and left them as legacies their ideas indeed, but also the spirit and power of their personalities. The Hebrew history, big with messianism, was to bring forth something yet greater than a world's rabbi. The Hebrew people knew, the Hebrew prophets had seen deeply, and had written their visions, which were read in the synagogues every Sabbath day, and no darkening exegesis could hide the light of it, — that the Christ was to be a Prince and a Saviour. Contemporary history indeed was suggesting it, for not the Greek, but the Roman, not the men of thought, but the men of will, were at the head of the world's affairs. The people knew, when they saw one greater than the greatest rabbi; and the tribes of men through-

out the world to-day know when they see him, if they never knew before, that Jesus is greater than the greatest teacher: there is a spontaneous worship of Jesus as "Lord" wherever his name is known. Burn your creeds, all of them, to-day, and dethrone Jesus from his place at the right hand of Eternal Majesty, and the loving and not witless world's heart will reënthrone and re-deify him to-morrow.

## XII.

### THE FULLNESS OF GOD.

#### A COMMUNION SERMON.

The fullness of God. — EPHESIANS iii. 19.

THIS letter of the great Paul — for I shall regard it as his, though the question is mooted by the scholars — was probably written during his enforced leisure while waiting to be transferred to Rome. Though in prison, he was not isolated. A highway from Asia Minor and the west to Jerusalem passed through Cæsarea, and he was in frequent communication with persons whom he had known during his active career. It was the time of the long Roman peace, an age of much travel and commercial and mental activity, in many ways not unlike that in which we live. Like this, too, it was an age of cosmopolitanism, gathering its ideas, as it did its merchandise, from all parts of the world. The apostle, thus in intercourse with the world, but forbidden his accustomed activity and supported at public expense, was perhaps able to enter into a more comprehensively intelligent interest in events. He had by natural selection

chosen as the scene of his labors in the gospel those parts of the world which were fullest of the modern spirit and energy. There he had planted his churches in the busy whirl of life. It was the kind of thing he liked. He believed in men and in their doings. He believed in life. He believed that the gospel belonged to the living world crowded with affairs. He was a Catholic, not a Separatist. He grasped that frequent saying of Jesus, that he came that men might have life, and might have it abundantly.

It was Paul's rediscovery of this fact that saved the gospel from oblivion. The Jewish followers of Jesus were tending to become a sect of recluses who ran away from life like monks, who practiced separating rites, and made a virtue of negations. He began his career by proclaiming that everything was good in its way, that there was room for everything, and that the best place to preach the gospel was where men were thickest and busiest. He struck out for the centres of population and of intercourse, and there he planted his churches.

Asia Minor was in that day the scene of an intense life. Upon slavery and monopoly, as to-day upon machinery and monopoly, was flourishing a class endowed with wealth and leisure. Since there was no pity for him, the slave took precisely the place machinery does to-day. There was a prosperous middle class engaged in trade. Disregarding the slave, as they did, society was well-

to-do and intelligent. There was a general smattering of learning. The lecture lyceum system was universal. Men were mentally alert and had an itch for novel ideas. Eclecticism was the rage. The greater variety of elements one could weave into his thought, the more learned he was thought. It was a shallow method with most, yet at that time anything else would have been more objectionable. Out of this medley the natural tendency of the mind was already beginning to bring a species of organic unity. Something of Persian dualism and Hindoo theosophy, brought by travelers, many of them Jews of the dispersion, mingled with the wholesomer Hebrew and the saner Greek; and out of it were already beginning to appear signs of that which afterward was known as Gnosticism. It was a combination of philosophy and religion and manner of life. As yet it was only in the air. Intelligent and sensitive men felt it and were aware of its importance.

Paul knew of it. Indeed, his vigorous preaching of the philosophy of life had had something to do in causing its first crystallizations. Young men of open minds and generous impulses visited him in prison. Such men were always attracted to him by his sturdy manhood and intellectual breadth. He could learn from them what was doing in Ephesus and the other cities of Asia Minor, as we older men probe the young fellows from college or from the European universities about the freshest thought

which has not yet found its way into print. They could tell the apostle that which interested him exceedingly about the latest philosophical speculations and the terms which were current. It was the age of the *gnosis*, that is, of science. As yet that word meant knowledge in its general sense, as we employ, or should employ, the word *science*. It had not become the technical name of a system. After the term *science*, which was meant to indicate their method, the most common and important term was *pleroma*, or "fullness." All the lyceums were occupied in debates about the fullness, somewhat as a few years ago, while the doctrine of development was still on trial, every class-room discussion touched upon evolution. This doctrine of the fullness was to the general effect that mind, that reason, that wisdom, truth, power, life, so abounded as to fill the universe; so that folly, falsehood, weakness, death, unreason, were crowded out. It was as yet vague and self-contradictory, a medley from the four corners of the earth. Yet there was something hopeful about its affirmation of the fullness. Men had been content, partly because of mental indolence or cowardice, to think there was much of emptiness, that in fact the odds were on the side of negations. "Oh, to be nothing, nothing," they had sighed, and had fled from life with its full experiences as though they contaminated. Negations were practiced under the mistake that they were virtues. A conflict was waged



between morality, on one hand, and life, hope, energy, intelligence, all that was positive in manhood, on the other. Goodness was associated with asceticism. This new doctrine affirmed all the positives, and declared that the universe was full and not empty. Fullness, said these young men, fullness was now the word to conjure with. They spoke with animation. Their eyes sparkled. It was evident they were disposed to be partisans of the new doctrine. It was affirmative. It was plausible. It was cosmopolitan. It was modern, up to date. And the young men liked it.

It was a critical time for the gospel. If Paul had made a mistake at that point, it cannot be predicted what would have happened. We know by the Fourth Gospel that the churches of Asia Minor so far assimilated the new thought as to be able to survive without losing touch with the intellectual world. But if Paul had made a mistake at this juncture, and if Christianity had parted company with the intellectual world at that time in Asia Minor, it is hard to see how it could have gathered forces for the conquest of the Roman Empire. For be it remembered that, as the Greek intellect had conquered Rome, so Christianity conquered Rome, largely by conquering the Greek intellect. It was a critical issue, and Paul had destinies in his hands. Had he warned the young men, as many young men in these days are warned concerning modern thought, that they would better

let the whole business alone, keep out of the intellectual whirl, stick to the simple gospel, and let the world sweep by them with its unsanctified progress, they would at once have divided into three parts. The intellectually weak would have accepted his advice, the intellectually strong would have rejected it and deserted the gospel, the third class would consist of those in whose minds would be precipitated a conflict with varying results. James would have done just that thing. He did it so far as his power went. His epistle, full of the spirit of Christlikeness and of excellent advice against modern evils, especially wealth-worship, was nevertheless written with a view to attacking modern thought. His pious opinion was that the young people of his day were talking too much, and would do better to keep their tongues still, and not mix up with worldly philosophy. Give alms and keep out of worldly things, was his prescription for piety. Now James had a part to play, and he played it well. But it was fortunate for the future of Christianity that he was not in Paul's place that day. The church which was under his influence anchored where it was, and waited for the millennium; and before the millennium came it died. Paul's churches undertook to bring the millennium; and when it comes it will have been partly their work.

When Paul heard about this modern doctrine of the fullness, and saw how much these young men

were interested in it, he became interested too, partly on their account, and partly because he was like them. He had no objection to bringing things up to date. It was a mark of respect to the past to assume that it could reproduce itself in a new and living present. Not its mummy but its progeny was to be preserved. Other things being equal, the latest should be the best. And this doctrine of the fullness was particularly attractive to him. He never did like emptiness and negations. The touch-nots, taste-nots, handle-nots of some classes of moralists annoyed him beyond measure. He had suffered privations enough himself, but to him they were not privations; he had chosen them, but not as such. They were simply the crowding out of the less by the greater. His celibacy was apostolic, not monkish. He was too busy and too adventurous to think it right he should compromise a woman in his destiny. He disclaimed any virtue in it. His virtue consisted in the things he did, not in the things he abstained from. His life was full. Even his privations, his hunger and nakedness, were part of the wealth of life to him. "Oh, the depth of the riches!" he exclaims.

Because of his own love of a full life, Paul saw no reason why he should antagonize this new philosophy of the fullness. He wished to know more about it. He questioned his visitors closely. New ideas were published in those days chiefly by word

of mouth, and hence these young men were good conversationalists. When did this new philosophy of life begin to be talked about? It was not long after he left Asia Minor. The orators and itinerant lecturers who had been accustomed to deal with trivial and miscellaneous topics, depending for their popularity upon the brilliancy of their oratorical flights, the winningness of their tones, and the originality of their diction and illustrations, seemed to turn toward more serious discourse, and to attempt actually to say something that applied to life. "Ah!" said Paul; "do you think they were forced to this by the competition of the preachers of the gospel?" The young men had not thought of it, but confessed that the suggestion was reasonable because, until they took to philosophizing in serious mood, they had been losing ground while the churches were gaining. "As to their ideas," again said Paul, "did any of them ever hear me, or more particularly the brilliant Barnabas preach?" "They were too proud to listen openly," was replied, "but we happen to know that many of them listened behind pillars, or sent their pupils to take notes." "So it would seem," said Paul; "I recognize tones of the gospel in what you report of their sayings, and I rejoice that even in strife and vainglory Christ is being preached, though so imperfectly." "They do not mention Jesus," reply the youths, "their philosophy is secular." "Nay, my sons," replies

the apostle, "there is no secular. All things are Christ's, and Christ is God's. But they do not say that, do they?" "No," is the reply, "they ignore it altogether; and though it puzzled us, we decided that we could worship Jesus religiously without having him in our philosophy. So we have done the best we could. But it is disturbing." "Yes," said Paul, "Christ has as much place in your philosophy as in your religion. But I will ponder over it, and write you what I think. Is there any God in this fullness?" "No. God is too infinite and holy to be in it. It originated from Him, as all things do. He is the First Cause, but He is at an infinite distance. The demiurge is the creator of things." "I can teach you a more excellent way. But do not cease to learn all you can about it; it is true as far as it goes. Worship and obey the Christ, and learn this doctrine. The two will not conflict in the end. I will write you later."

The young men leave and the apostle ponders. It is clear to him that it was the preaching of the gospel of Christ which forced the popular teachers into a more serious strain, and gave them, moreover, some hints. They were right about the fullness, — except that it must not be conceived of as Godless and Christless. To him God was in all, and Christ was in all. His life had been full and real because he had known Jesus. It was Jesus who had multiplied his relationships so marvelously; and

relationships constitute life. Modern progress was offering him a fullness without God and without Christ. Should he forego modern progress? Should he turn his back upon the wealth of culture there was in it, upon the throbbing life of the great centres which he had burned with discontent to capture for the gospel? Must he become a recluse, a separatist, an obscurantist, a reviler of progress? Or must he surrender these experiences of the Christ, which have filled his life so full? Must he tell these noble-hearted, clear-eyed, broad-minded, high-spirited young fellows to choose between modernism and the Christ he had preached to them? Or shall he encourage them to live double lives, putting their Christianity in certain preserves, as we shut up our uncivilized Indians on reservations. God forbid that he should do any of these things.

There is no partition of interest, and no conflict between Christ and all wholesome modernism. Indeed, it was the stimulus of the gospel that caused the rise of that new doctrine in Asia Minor. It was the Christ-power that had so fructified the past as to produce the living present. Paul seized the vigorous modern thought and made it thrill with the gospel. This epistle of the Ephesians is full of the phrases that were heard in all the popular lecture-rooms of Ephesus. The terms "heavenly places," "prudence," "wisdom," "mystery," "fullness of time," "things in heaven and things

on earth," "spirit of wisdom and revelation," "principalities," "powers," "dominions," were all employed in the metaphysical speculations of the new philosophy. But while he uses these terms, he shuns metaphysics. The terms of his philosophy are not imaginary entities, but God and Christ and men and spiritual forces that actually work before his eyes in history. The fullness of time is the ripeness of human experience. The fullness, or *pleroma*, which constitutes the supreme and boundless reality of things, instead of being some speculative congeries of things not intelligible, is a society of redeemed men and women forming the body of him in whom was all the fullness of God. Paul captured the metaphysical philosophy which marked at that time the farthest outpost of modernism, and made good use of every part of it; but he made of it a social and a religious philosophy. He made it concrete, he made it genuine and real. The fullness at which they had been aiming he declared was the fullness of a universe thronged with Godhood and manhood, and the mystery they mulled over was the mystery of divine love.

Life! Yes the universe was crammed, not so much with an entity called life, as with a living God and a triumphant risen Christ and living men! It was a live universe, thrilling, vibrating, pulsating with the life of love, and the fullness of the universe was the full heart of God, full of the care of his children, full of complacency in them.



Heaven and earth were crowded with population ; and if but the alienation that made mutual strangers and enemies of men could be removed, the fullness of God would be realized. The gospel was that it was the mission of the Christ to remove that alienation, and that he had nailed it to his cross ; so that now strangerism, which meant hostility, was to cease, and all were to be fellow-citizens and of the household of God. It was a bold, a skillful, and withal a legitimate stroke for the apostle thus to occupy the most strategic points of modernism, and to plant there the standard of the gospel. It belonged to him by every right. He who had become the Christ had fulfilled all the philosophies ; and the preaching of him had been the direct cause of the foundation of that particular philosophy. While it was metaphysical, it is to be remembered that metaphysical thinking is only covert sociological thinking. Men took refuge from tyrants in the cave of metaphysics where they could express and yet conceal their thoughts. They did this rather instinctively than cautiously, hunted animals as they were. Had the world's despots suspected what potencies for the reform of life and the overthrow of vested wrong have been and are still hidden in the metaphysical formula for the Christian conception of God, they would have been as cruel and relentless in their hostility to it as they have often been in its defense. He that sitteth in the heavens must have

laughed, the Lord must have had in derision those who, in imagining they were riveting the fetters of men, were only conserving the potencies of a liberty that was to be. It was fair, therefore, that Paul should claim this philosophy as an imperfect and unintentional statement of the case of the gospel. It was the world-mind groping after the knowledge of the Christ. Whom they ignorantly speculated about, him Paul declared unto them. The dry seeds of metaphysics, watered by the Spirit, brought forth fruit unto vital personal character and personal relationships. Read the first three chapters of this letter to the Ephesians, and observe how the apostle baptizes the phrases of the current philosophy with social and genuinely religious meanings.

I shall not linger to make application of this. What I have said of the circumstances of its writing, and of the actions and motives of Paul, and of his attitude toward the modernism of his day, is no fancy of mine, but, as nearly as I can learn, historically accurate. It teaches its own lesson. The gospel of Jesus is nowhere so vital as where it is most modernized. Dangers, indeed, there are in premature adjustments, but not so great as in stolid reactionism. Young men and women of to-day, in the name of Jesus I bid you make the most of it. To-day is a day of the fullness. This year we have just left behind us was a full year. The year we are beginning is to be fuller. Every year

of this era is more intensely occupied than that which went before it. Politics, social intercourse, intellectual culture, business and professional interests of all kinds are crowding the days.

But, young people, let this not be a Godless or a Christless fullness. It need not be. It is ungrateful and unphilosophical and unhistorical that it should be. For I tell you the very fullness of the life we live is the creation of Jesus, and through the preaching of him, as the new philosophy of Asia Minor had its initial stimulus in the apostolic missions. All our manifold material life to-day is dependent upon combined social stability and progress. This is dependent upon the existence, permanence, and character of the fundamental human relationships, social and religious, and this, as can well be shown, depends upon the new social and religious spirit, for which the world is indebted to Jesus and the preaching of Jesus. For observe that only in those parts of the world where "the foolishness of preaching" is maintained does the social potency of this gospel minister to fullness of life. Young people, it is not a Godless nor a Christless fullness of life you are enjoying. It is the fullness of God, and it was made and is being maintained and increased continually by the Christ. I bid you in the year we are now entering upon to make the most of it, to multiply your relationships as much as you can, choosing them wisely, of course, not imagining that the Christ-life is lean

and meagre, or chiefly represented by touch-nots. Carry with you the sense that there is nothing secular, there is no legitimate business that is not divine. A bright, honorable man came to me not long since, and said he wanted to get out of business and go into the ministry, because he said he could not be a Christian in business. Not a Christian in business! I refuse to believe it. I told him that if he would try as hard to put Christ into business as to get money out, he could serve the cause there as he could not in the ministry. A railroad president, who recently resigned, told a friend of mine that he could be a Christian in every other capacity of life except as a member of the railroad managers' association; there he could not practice simple truthfulness. When he testified before the strike commission in Chicago, you can imagine how much I believed of his testimony; and the commission seems to have been similarly impressed. I did not believe his testimony then, and I do not believe him when he said that he could not be an honest railroad official. Why, the railroad is part of the modern fullness, and it was Jesus who created it. I tell you, friends, that Jesus is the creator of the railroad, and he lies who says the Christ has no place in the railroad business. There are some people — Count Tolstoi is their prophet — who believe that all modern progress is based upon robbery, that it is of the Devil; and having the courage of their convic-

tions, they would go back to barbarism and to a starved and empty life. I admire their consistency. They are better than those who believe as they do about modernism, but decline to make their choice. But I do not believe as they do. I stand with Paul that this modern fullness of life is the fullness not of the Devil but of God. My people, stand by modernism in the name of Christ, and enjoy it as children of God.

These symbols, this bread and this wine,—I wish more of you thought seriously upon the meaning of them,—are the memorial of the divineness of all that is primary in those human relationships which have now grown so abundantly, and have ministered to the fullness of modern life. Simple they are, the symbols of the cell-unit of true life; they mean that all the stability and all the constructive energy of the modern manifoldness of life are found in the sacrifice of love. They testify, and may they testify with regenerating force to some of you, that the fullness of modern life is not because of but in spite of its selfishness. Take out of it the yeast of self-sacrifice, and it would soon fall flat. Take away the salt of unselfishness, and it will putrefy. The closest of causal relationships exists between the body of self-sacrifice which is in the world to-day and the self-sacrifice of Jesus of Nazareth. The closest of causal relationships exists between that body of self-sacrifice and the

memory of Jesus' sacrifice. The closest of causal relationships exists between that body of self-sacrifice and the stability and growth of the manifoldness of modern life. The closest of causal relationships therefore exists between the keeping of this memorial and the preservation of modern life from the forces of disintegration, between the keeping of this memorial and my individual safety and yours as we live the modern life. In so far, therefore, as it fulfills its mission as a symbol, it is a saving ordinance.

### XIII.

#### THE IMPERIALISM OF CHRISTIANITY.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. — DANIEL ii. 44.

THIS is prophecy on a royal scale, founded upon the perception of those broader and deeper realities which the prophet's average contemporary could not discern, and the grasp of truths out of the range of the ordinary mind. It is the mission of the prophet to perceive whatever reality, religious, moral, social, political, possesses rightful human interest. And in this care he sees and declares concerning certain great politico-historical facts, measuring and forecasting the world's imperialisms. Before him moves a procession of mighty empires, each able by some peculiar superiority to overwhelm its predecessor. Already in his day the strongest and weakest of them all begins to loom up in the West, Rome, mixed of iron and clay, strong for conquest, yet unable to bring things into an organic unity, and hence creating by processes merely of de-



struction an empire which for want of a higher constructive force will fall to pieces of its own weight. And the development of world-powers was in a way to be consummated by Rome. The image was to be completed by her. By her own nature she was to be the last, and, becoming her own rival, to destroy herself. Is the prophetic intuition foreseen? And then after Rome, what?

Our prophet has an answer for that question, too, because his is not only prophecy but Hebrew prophecy. To the Hebrew prophet a thing or two was known of much consequence to the world's history, which his Gentile contemporary, though never so great a prophet, could scarcely dream of. For the Hebrew race was itself the agent, and a remarkably self-conscious one, of an historical force peculiarly its own. It was "the secret of Jehovah," and was "with them that worshiped him," as their psalter said. The mystery kept in silence from times eternal, but now hinted to the prophetic minds who followed the Jehovah-cult, was a mystery which much concerned the course of empires. The Hebrew consciousness, from Abraham down, had been an imperial consciousness, had anticipated an imperial destiny, and had been averse to realizing itself in anything short of imperial fashion. The expansion of the Hebrew state under David to almost imperial dimensions was no surprise or innovation; David had the true spirit of Israel. The fortunate

failure and contraction of it through the folly of Solomon and the bitterness of his successors did not dissipate the feeling that Israel's future had in its keeping imperial destinies. When, therefore, the true Hebrew prophet contemplates the cycles of history, he cannot fail to assert with unwavering force that after Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Greek, and Roman imperialism follows, with greater splendor and more permanency, the Hebrew imperialism.

Moreover, this imperial tradition contained from the first the germ of the idea that Hebrew world-conquest was to differ essentially from that of the other powers. Hence, even in David's day, possibly in his own mind, there was a source of unsatisfactoriness about his achievements, as though they might be in danger of leading away from instead of toward the truest form of fulfillment of the imperial promises. But the Hebrew was put into something of a quandary by this. He could not give up the idea of imperial success, and yet he could not rid himself of the idea that there was to be a difference in kind between the Hebrew and the other empires. He instinctively sought a way to give expression to this difference without losing or lowering the sense of reality in the Hebrew as compared with other empires. Fortunately, he was no metaphysician, else in his reach after the spiritual he would have let go the material, and then, missing both, would have

landed in an abstraction. We can never pay, we cannot even compute, the debt we owe the Hebrew prophet for holding on to the real while he aimed at the ideal, until the two became one. He was determined that the Hebrew world-conquest should not be less real and concrete than that of Babylon or that of Rome. It was to be a part of actual history. If he conceived of it as a spiritual conquest, he did so not with the qualifying adverb "merely," as is the ordinary custom in these degenerate days, by which the spiritual is set in antithesis to the real rather than to the material, and a spiritual conquest becomes a mere ghost of a real conquest. If, as is natural, he could not think of a real world-empire without picturing it under materialistic forms, he had the courage of his materialism, and he so pictured it. That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is material; and though abstraction as a logical process cannot be spared, that abstraction of the material which takes the place of the spiritualization of it opens the way to disastrous error. Christianity is in these days suffering a good degree of moral paralysis by the substitution of the abstract for the spiritual, so that thereby the material world and material things are permitted to appear much more real and concrete than the spiritual world and spiritual things. Genuine spiritual things are the more real things, and it is the fault or the weak-

ness of our preaching, if we have not made them so to appear. The error is not one for which the Hebrew prophets are responsible. If they had fallen into it, if they had not been the splendid realists they were, they would never have succeeded in bringing in the Hebrew imperialism.

Yet, while in order to maintain their realistic position the prophets portrayed the coming world-conquest in half-materialistic shape, they saw and plainly intimated that there was to be some different and higher thing in it; and that between the imperial Hebrew power and those which had successively ruled the world before it, the distinction in nature and origin was radical. The prophet in this case jealously forbids the supposition that the Hebrew is to be one of a series of powers and to rank with them; hence he represents them as together making a complete image, which complete image the Hebrew power is in an unprecedented way to destroy and supersede. The Hebrew consciousness recognizes as its antagonist and rival, not simply the empire which happens to be for the time at the head of the world's affairs, but all world-empire, past, present, and future — "all rule and all authority and power." In truth, it was such an imperialism that whomsoever it crowned as its Cæsar would have to be reckoned as not less than a god, and a god, too, not in the circumscribed sense in which it was ascribed to the deified Cæsars of Rome, but in

the uncircumscribed sense which deity came to have in the Jehovah religion.

For this empire was the empire of Jehovah, and its Cæsar would rank with Jehovah. Whatsoever man ever came to believe himself the Hebrew Messianic emperor, and nourished his imperial ambition upon the vaticinations of the Hebrew prophets, could be expected to claim nothing less than an exaltation to the right hand of Supreme Majesty. Upon such meat will the Hebrew Cæsar feed and grow to his greatness. Of such historic necessity was the ascription of godhood to the Jewish Messiah.

As all the world knows, one did arise who, in full sincerity and with adequate ability and ambition, did undertake to fulfill the Messianic ambition of the Hebrew prophets. And as his imperial enterprise unfolded itself before him, and his imperial consciousness developed in pace with it, he grew to fulfill and to create the reality which, with sure prevision, they had foretold, while in turn the forms of his ideas were largely fixed by his familiarity with the prophets themselves. This prophecy from which our text is taken was a favorite with Jesus whenever he contemplated his mission in its broader and more comprehensive features. Its imagery served to picture, not only to his disciples, but to his own mind, those transcendental anticipations he had of his future relation to the world as its Lord and Master. His idea of the divinity of

his empire caused him to claim deification for himself, instead of robbing the empire of concreteness and tangibility. He wanted the earth and he claimed it, and set his enterprise going with an imperial character.

From that day to this, Christianity, whenever it has been true to itself, has been an imperial movement. It has aimed at, and can consistently aim at nothing short of, world-conquest. It has not always been easy for it to do this. At the beginning it had to regain something of the breadth of the old prophets' idea. In Jesus' day Judaism had frittered away its imperialism, and in two directions. Palestinian Judaism had permitted its sense that it ought to rule the world to take the form of a narrow and isolating pride, which only unfitted it to do so, and made certain its failure to do so. Alexandrian Judaism, on the other hand, and there were as many Jews in Egypt as in Palestine, under the lead of Philo, whose highest aim was to reconcile Plato and Moses, was ready to reduce Israel's highest claim to that of possessing the universal religion, an example which easy-going Christian teachers frequently follow. Now, the Hebrew and Christian claim is much more than that they have the universal religion, though they have that among all else. Hebrew imperialism is not a mere doctrine, or set of doctrines, any more than is British imperialism, although doctrines are important to it, as the main

doctrines of the British constitution are essential to British imperialism. The Hohenzollern doctrine, or dogma, is quite an essential factor in German imperialism, as it stands to-day. But German imperialism is no mere doctrine; it is a fact of blood and iron. The doctrine of manhood suffrage and equality seems to most of us to be essential to our position as the modern imperial republic. But the fact of our republican imperialism is something else, and something greater than this and all other doctrines combined. It is the fact to which the doctrines only appertain. It is a necessary incident to the Christian imperialism that it should have the universal religion. Some believe, and I am of the number, that it is a necessary incident to Christian imperialism that its theological conception should be trinitarian, that it should not only worship the All Father, but that it should deify Jesus and the spirit of holiness. But to identify the Christian imperialism with the idea of universal religion, or the dogma of the Trinity, is quite to surrender it.

Yet that is one of the commonest and most enervating errors of to-day. Too many of us are Philonists, when we ought to be Christians. The true Hebrew imperialism of Jesus' day was not found in the liberal schools of Alexandria any more than in the conservative sects of Palestine. It was found in that remnant to which belonged Zacharias and Elizabeth, and Mary and the Beth-



lehem shepherds, and Simeon and Anna, the remnant that gave birth to the Messianic King and fed its expectations neither upon rabbinical traditions nor upon philosophical speculations. Their utterances show the true Hebrew imperial consciousness better than all the writings of the rabbins or of Philo ; and from them and their utterances in public and private came the nutriment for the development of the Messianic character in the man of destiny himself.

So nearly empty of true imperial consciousness was the official Judaism of Jesus' day, that, in spite of his own most magnificent self-revelations and self-assertions, the infant church would have been dwarfed into a Jewish sect, had not circumstances provided a capital for it elsewhere than at Jerusalem. Jewish Christianity soon dried up into a new species of Pharisaism, and the church at Jerusalem became a mere group of separatists. But there stepped into the arena one Saul of Tarsus, a Jew of Jews, yet a Roman citizen of no mean Greek city. Back of this, of course, lies some history. It was no mere accident that Paul, a Jew of the dispersion, rescued Christianity from sectarianism to Catholicism, that his spirit had no rest until he crossed the Bosphorus, and planted the standard of the cross on the continent of the Occident to which belonged the future, until in turn it passed it on to a farther one yet undiscovered ; that in all his journeying his face was to-

ward Rome, so that he could rejoice even in bonds which carried him to the imperial city. This was no accident. Something in Paul's antecedents put that spirit into him, the same, probably, which made his father a Roman citizen and an inhabitant of one of the Greek university towns. Paul added nothing to the imperial consciousness of Jesus. The assertion has been made, but cannot be sustained, that it was he who exalted Jesus to the right hand of God, and made him King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Paul really made no claims for Jesus which Jesus had not made for himself; what he did was to rescue those claims from a threatened oblivion. By starting from Antioch, and making it instead of Jerusalem the capital of Christendom, by setting up the standard of the gospel in Ephesus and Athens and Corinth, and possibly also indirectly in Rome and Alexandria, he established in imperial centres points whence the imperial authority of Jesus could make itself felt.

And so the Christian consciousness after some vacillation proved true to its origin in the Hebrew, and held to its imperialism. This has been the occasion, it is true, as it was in Israel, of bad mistakes, which might have been avoided had its claims been more humble. It generated a worldly ambition, and brought about the mesalliance with Roman imperialism, the ugly spawn of which, half God, half devil, has not ceased to afflict the whole

earth. The fruit of this unlawful union is not confined to that which is still called by the Roman name; for the union was consummated at Constantinople, and the Eastern church shares its evil, while what is called the reformation did not quite change the complexion of the whole northwest, nor could ecclesiastical and political rebellion remove the taint from the blood. Protestantism, indeed, as its name implies, was in many respects more of a reaction than of a reform; and in this respect especially, that, instead of rescuing the idea of imperialism from the errors which had gathered about it, she sacrificed it almost altogether, so that her crying sin is sectarianism, like that of Jerusalem in the days of the early church.

Almost the only imperial tradition which the reformed churches retained was the Augustinian theology. Because it was imperial it has done superb service. And this service is not less the result of its imperialism, though one choose to question whether it be not more Roman than Hebrew, whether its God has not more of the qualities of Jove than of Jehovah, whether the earlier Christian idea of God, not as a single irresponsible will, but as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God blessed forever, can come again into the organic thought of the church, except in proportion as the sovereignty taught by Augustine is at least reduced to a strictly constitutional form. And even Augustinianism, imperial in at least the

Roman sense, has some time in the past fallen into the service of sectarianism, as Cæsar's clay might be used to stop a chink. It is wholly safe to predict that, unless Protestants can recover the Christian imperial consciousness, Protestantism, like Jerusalem, must be deserted, and the work of fulfilling the Christ-mission must go elsewhere.

It is believed by some that a race is beginning between Romanism and Protestantism to see which shall Christianize the world. To imperialism of the Hebrew kind alone belongs that destiny. Rome has the imperialism, but seems to fail of the Hebraism ; it is rather the old Augustan imperialism. Protestantism has the Hebraism, but has let go the imperialism ; it is the Hebraism of Philo or of Gamaliel.

"Now," say some, "give us a Western pope ; one who is able to think in English ; one who knows that the English tongue is as truly the imperial language of to-day as was the Latin when it became the sacred tongue of the Church. Let him relegate that which is obsolete in Rome and Romanism to the museums of ancient history. Let him make his headquarters on the Thames or the Hudson ; or, better still, let him recognize the fact that, with the opening of the Chicago exposition, the capital of English-speaking Christendom moved from Canterbury, where it had been for a thousand years, to Central North America, where it will be for the next thousand years. And let

him acknowledge that where the English-speaking capital is, there is the capital of all Christendom. There let him plant himself, and re-Christianize the Roman church by occidentalizing it, and he has enough imperialism to become the arbiter of the world's destinies."

On the other hand, let Protestantism come up to the level of its own great idea. Let it forget its littlenesses and negations. Let it remember that history dates farther back than John Robinson, or Roger Williams, or John Knox, or John Calvin, or Martin Luther; farther than the Saybrook platform or the Westminster or Augsburg confessions; that the world cannot be made to spin about the meaning of a Greek particle. Let it cultivate the historical sense, which it has lost or trifled with. Let it realize that it is an organic part of history, and that its sacred scripture is the literature of the greatest of histories.

Let it regain its imperial consciousness, and let this consciousness become, as it easily may, an all-prevailing motive in the breasts of its humblest followers, and Protestantism can sway the destinies of mankind.

One hundred years from to-day the world will be English speaking. German and French will be of as little relative importance as Welsh and Portuguese are to-day, and Spanish and Italian will rank where Gaelic does to-day. To-day the English-speaking world is overwhelmingly Prot-

estant, and socially it has an imperial consciousness. The Briton or American feels that he belongs to the race to which belongs the world, and he bears himself accordingly, and when occasion comes he manifests that imperial race-consciousness in splendid fashion. But how about his Christian consciousness? Is that imperial? or is it paltry, provincial, sectarian? Augustinianism aside, the fairest substitute the English-speaking Christian has for true Hebraism is commonly Alexandrianism, on one hand, or Pharisaism on the other, according as he belongs to what is called the liberal or the conservative wing — the liberal being Alexandrian in its type, and the conservative Palestinian. Neither of these possesses that imperialism which has the promise and potency of world-conquest. It is deplorable, but it is true, and must be said, that the imperial English-speaking race is not dominated by Messianic imperialism.

But substantial progress is making toward that end. The race between Romanism and Protestantism from opposite directions for the goal of world-conquest has begun, and is provoking good effects on both sides. On the Roman side it has begun by the effort to give a true Messianic character to the existing imperialism, to use imperial position to further Christly ends, as Cardinal Manning so habitually did, and as is witnessed by the tardy quickening of the conscience of the

Vatican on the slavery issue, by the zeal of the late Cardinal Lavigerie, by the new humanitarian attitude of the Pope on the Sunday question, and the well-meant, if rather crude, deliverance upon the labor problem. The movement is halting, but it is a movement. Too much must not be asked of it at first. It is not easy for the heir of the Cæsars to play the Christ.

In Protestantism the progress has to be in a different direction, and has accordingly begun by the effort to use Christly influence on a princely scale. And since this is an intensely practical age, this progress shows itself in deeds rather than in ideas. Nor is this unprecedented. The writings which have produced the most profound effect, even doctrinally, upon the Christian church, are a dozen business letters of a man whose care of the churches was so heavy that he had no opportunities to prepare treatises. The most significant aspects of the modern church are presented in the great charitable and missionary movements, comparable to nothing else since the first century, and surpassing the similar movements of that age. In these is seen the reawakening imperialism in the Messianic consciousness of Protestants. I have looked into the text-book used in the training of the officers of the Salvation Army. The theology is narrow, and the controversial parts much out of date. But everything is redeemed from what would otherwise be



pitiable weakness by the ring of the imperial purpose of world-conquest, which is through it all. The action of those little bands which march the streets with flags and martial music is not ridiculous. It is a symbolic expression of their determination to play a part, however humble, in the conquest of the world, and it ought to shame some of those who look down upon it out of the small-mindedness which has lost sight of this imperial purpose, without which the Christianity we ourselves profess ranks no higher than any one of a hundred other isms.

It is a fact that the first great Protestant missionary movement started from narrow sects, as though sectarianism had swung to an extreme, and then set out on the return movement. Narrowness has a certain advantage in generating intensity. It acts like the bore of a gun barrel, and the mystical pietism of certain reformation sects in Germany first began to react from itself in the form of missionary activity. For the piety, though narrow, was genuine, and could no more be content without the "communion of saints" than without the other evangelical privileges claimed by the Catholic and Apostolic creed. Having cut itself off from the rest of Christianity, its yearnings went out after the heathen world. In England also missionary enterprises began among those whose broader activities were not permitted in the realism of thought. It is easier

to act than to think. The life of action is the life of least resistance, and so imperial activity has preceded imperial thought elsewhere. The first American missionaries who labored in India and Burmah held contracted views on many points. But there was nothing contracted, nothing less than imperial in their spirit and action, in which they laid the foundation of the kingdom of Jesus; so that it was Christian rather than British imperialism that first set foot in Southern Asia, and Christian imperialism promises there to complete the conquest in which British imperialism is having some success. I think one may be free to say that for two centuries the thought and organization of Protestantism have often been provincial, undignified, not worthy of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of all things. But the aggressive zeal, the evangelical impetus of Protestant Christianity have been growing more imperial for a hundred years, and it now needs only to take council of its own impulse and enterprise, and think its thought, and organize its work accordingly, and seek to infuse the spirit of it into its entire membership. And this is coming about with much rapidity. The charge has truth in it that breadth of thought has not been commonly associated with aggressive zeal. Had such a man as Mr. Moody, when the impulse to act came to him, waited to equip himself with a set of religious conceptions commensurate with his

deeds, he would have grown old before he reached the deeds. But clothing his zeal in ready-made and sometimes ill-fitting notions, he went on to do his work, and it is a small mind which cannot feel the breath of his imperial activities.

Half of us nominal Christians have no idea of the magnificent proportions which Christianity is assuming in our day. We fail to realize how Japan is grasping the thought and imitating the activities of Christendom, so that in ten years Japan may be as Christian as America, fresher in her thought, and more abundant in her Christian zeal. We do not know, half of us, that a rejuvenation of customs and a recrystallization of the ruling thought of the ruling class in India is imminent, and we are heedless if not ignorant of the fact that no thought can crystallize or recrystallize to-day other than under the dominance of Jesus of Nazareth. Most of us fail to realize the imperial possibilities of the Central African movement, and that Christianity will there meet and compete, not with heathenism, for that will retire without a fight, but with Mohammedanism, and Mohammedanism on the only soft side, the only human side which Mohammedanism presents — the side of Madhism, which is a species of undirected and abortive Moslem messianism. All the rest of Mohammedanism is impenetrable, hard-crusted deism. Christ's road to Mecca lies up the Congo and down the Nile; and that imperial highway is being opened.

Do people know all this? Do Christian people know it? Do newsgatherers discover this imperial fact? Nay, if they have a scent for news of that kind, it is of little commercial value, because we with our mercantilisms and our denominationalism care little for such news. The fault is ours.

We should, however, and I trust that we who are here do share in the waking up, which is giving to Christendom a new imperial consciousness, which will not stop short of bridging the widest chasms and bringing in a new and all-embracing catholicism — a new consciousness, and yet an old consciousness, inherited from the father of the faithful, who believed that in him all the kindred of the earth should be blessed; a consciousness whose horizon is as distant as that of national faith.

We are Americans, citizens of an imperial republic, whose present greatness surpasses description, and whose prospective destiny beggars imagination. Let us match our national consciousness with a Christian consciousness equally imperial. The more should we as Americans do this, because it is a fact which can be shown by incontestable historical evidence, that, great as is our material heritage, our nation is indebted more than to anything else to the Hebrew-Christian imperialism for those constructive ideas which have made it great, and carried it successfully through the crises which

have come to it. Lowell is as accurate as he is poetical when he describes our nation-makers as "stern men with empires in their brains." We have the most adequate explanation of the presence of those empires in those brains when we know that the brains had been nourished upon the Hebrew scripture, that infallible source of conceptions great enough for men to live by. We hear inadequate ideas of Christianity sometimes apologized for, on the alleged ground that they serve men to live by. But, pray tell me, what it is for a man to live? How much room does he need? For my part, if you give me less than an empire to live in, I shall smother, I know I shall. Let us claim what belongs to us. We call Jesus King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We forget half the time that we are the kings of whom he is king; the lords whose overlord he is. The imperial consciousness has its place in every life. It is not for the few, the privileged, the cultured, those whose grasp of mind and range of opportunity is large. Christianity is democratic. It belongs to all, and the preacher of it commits a fatal error if he imagines that he knows anything too good or great to be imparted to the humblest. For the gospel is saving truth; it is a conception at once valid for to-day, and great enough to be intrusted with the eternities.

## XIV.

### THE DELUGE.

And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark ; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. — GENESIS vii. 1.

THIS account which we have of the deluge in the book of Genesis is the Hebrew edition of a legend which is current among all primitive races. It is not necessary to assume that the legend is based upon a single occurrence. The more probable explanation of it is that there have been few primitive peoples which have not, at some time within the dim memory of tradition, been obliged to survive great natural convulsions in the form of floods, when most of their members were lost. It would be natural that the number of survivors would shrink in the telling, until at last it would be but the necessary minimum. The earth has been subject to 'cataclysms ; and, since the conditions were such that early man lived in the valleys and river-plains, the occurrence of floods would be among the most important of those cataclysms. It is not strange, therefore, that such legends should be found everywhere.

As the races made progress, men would begin to reason it out why some survived, while others were lost. The mind of early man was of strong religious bent, and it naturally attributed the loss of the many to the anger, and the salvation of the few to the favoritism of the gods. Such was the raw material of legend with which the Hebrew genius had to deal when it undertook to construct its ideal history of the primitive world. Now the Hebrew mind was also religious, like that of all other races; and when it came to revise the legend of the flood, it did not propose to eliminate the religious element from it. To the Hebrew, as to his neighbors, that emergency was caused by God because of men's unfaithfulness, and the survival of the few was a work of the divine approval. But the Hebrew was not only religious, he was also moral. To him the divine approval or disapproval was founded upon moral discernment. It was not because of capricious anger that the many were condemned to be swept away, but because they were actually corrupt, and the earth was filled with violence. The Hebrew mind conceived of God as acting in this emergency less in anger than in sorrow. Nor was it because of a capricious favoritism toward Noah that he was spared. It was because he was a righteous man. It was because of character.

And so the Hebrew genius reconstructed the legend of the flood in its own way, to represent



what it conceived to be the leading facts in the development of the race. The element of originality in the Genesis account is not that it invented or recorded the story of the deluge, not that it put religious ideas into it; it is that it put a holy God and moral character into it. The whole key to the Hebrew legend of creation and of early man is found in this: in its effort to maintain that the ethical was in the world from the beginning, and that at every important crisis of affairs it was the ethical interest which was determinative.

The account of the deluge which we have in *Genesis* is vague and somewhat confused, because it is an attempt, not very completely carried out, to combine two separate versions into a single one. Even the unlearned reader will have no difficulty in distinguishing for the most part these two stories. Wherever the word "Lord" in small capitals, standing for *Jehovah*, is employed, the passages belong to one account; while when the word "God" is used, they belong to the other. For the most part the editor has simply mixed the two accounts, so that it is not difficult to separate them. In a few places, however, he has fused them together so that no one can distinguish, and there may have been a third version employed in a few cases. What is here worth observing is that, after we have taken apart this story, resolved it as far as we can into its older constituents, we find

that each of the older authors, while they vary in details, agree in the one thing which distinguishes this story from all other legends of the flood: they agree in making it appear that, in some way or other, moral worth was the saving factor at the period when the race had to pass through a great natural crisis.

This is noteworthy. It shows that the inspiration of the Hebrew scriptures is older than the final author of the book of Genesis, whoever that may have been; that the Hebrew spirit, which, as Matthew Arnold loved to say, reckoned conduct and character the supreme basis of safety, was present at the literary creation of the very elements which were afterward worked up into the book of Genesis. The Hebrews had two versions of this story, both inspired with that which distinguishes the Hebrew life and literature from all other. If it be claimed that Moses wrote the book of Genesis, then not only was he inspired, but he was the editor of inspired matter whose authors were older than himself. If it be held that the editor lived one thousand years after Moses, yet he uses material which, for all we know, may have been as old as Moses, and is inspired with the Hebrew ruling idea that righteousness counts for everything.

It was important that, if the Hebrew constructed any ideal history of early man, he should give to that history dramatic completeness by showing that

he had the power to survive natural convulsions. If he was evolved, it was in an Eden, but he was not evolved for an Eden. While he lingered in or about the confines of an Eden, the resources of his manhood could not be thoroughly tested. The man being, as the Hebrew conceived him, in the image of God, — that is, having been once adjusted to an absolute environment, — must prove himself superior to immediate circumstances ; and the power to do this must be evoked by a change of circumstances so great and sudden as to require, not merely the ordinary plasticity and adaptability of the animal, but the skill and forethought and fertility of resource of a very god. It was not, therefore, without an eye to symmetry and completeness that the author of Genesis inserted an account of the deluge in his epic of humanity. If his choice of material was controlled by his knowledge of human nature alone, there is reason enough why he should have made the deluge a part of his story.

All legends of the deluge agree that, from a material point of view, a crisis had come in the history of man. According to some, as has been said, the survivor escaped by pure favor of the gods, by accident, or by magic. Others credit him with superior skill and foresight. It is the Bible story alone which makes a moral crisis to impend along with the material. Here the moral purpose and the inspired genius of the Hebrew

writers appear, for it is a fact that moral and material crises have a way of coming together. Sometimes the coincidence is accidental; emergencies of both kinds are so frequent, that remarkable coincidences must occasionally occur. But far more frequently the same cause produces both. Our recurring financial crises are nearly all both material and moral. Not only trade but the spirit of trade is in need of a general liquidation and a fresh start, and because of the operation of the same causes. Then, again, a material crisis often produces or hastens a moral one. The moral turning-point in many a man's life has been where circumstances forced him to take a new direction, or make a new choice of motives and maxims. He has been hustled out of the nest in which he was reared, which he had not the courage or enterprise to leave of his own volition; the emergency has awakened the needed spirit, and he has risen to the occasion like a man. Sometimes a moral emergency has hastened a material crisis. The material strain in the relations of the American colonies to the mother country need not have compelled a separation for a century, had not moral incompatibilities provoked a revolution.

Man's moral and spiritual faculties are the record of our intimate relationship at some time or other with some corresponding moral and spiritual environment, and constitute a demand for a continuance of the relationship. Man is a unit,

and so is his environment. He does not consist of two wholly separate parts, of which one can be alive and thriving, while the other is dead and putrescent. God does not hold two entirely distinct relationships to man, one by nature and the other by grace. The distinction between the animal and the spiritual man is important, but it is somewhat less than absolute. Emergencies are sure to come when a man's material welfare is involved in his spiritual welfare, when God as the sum of material force and God as the great spiritual force are seen to be one and to be working together. These emergencies may come about in the natural way, and the conjunction of the material and the spiritual crises may be purely accidental; yet it is an accident which is sure to come at one time or other in the history of every race and of every man. The histories of nations show times when neither guns, nor fleets, nor armies, nor government credits, nor anything else than national virtue can save the national life.

There must have been a time in the history of the race — else it would not come to nations and individuals, who are copies of the race-life — when material and spiritual emergencies so coincided, that only the person of the highest spiritual character could pass safely through the dangers of the social crisis. The story of the deluge affords to the writer of Genesis a dramatic framework upon which to portray this event in the race-

history. The favoring material conditions, which had fostered man's earliest development, came abruptly to an end. All the highest qualities of a manhood made in the image of God were demanded to weather the storm, and make the transition into new conditions. But that manhood had been corrupted, and only one small group could be found walking with God, possessing such a spiritual life as to clear its intellect and strengthen its purpose and nerve its arm for the emergency. The spiritual degradation of the race blinded and debilitated and unnerved it, so that it could neither foresee nor forefend the trial of its manhood. The material crisis came, the fountains of the great deep were broken up, the ordinary material foundations of life removed, and men were unprepared for it, and ruin came upon them.

The tragedy has been repeated many times. There were outward and material causes for the fall of Rome. The pressure of the barbarians had nothing to do with any internal weakness of Rome herself. Yet the external crisis corresponded with an internal one. Rome's moral grandeur was in ruins. The splendid moral energy which had made her victorious over Greece and Carthage had been dissipated and corrupted, and Rome was morally unworthy to stand. But the Roman Church, the Noah of that deluge of barbarism, survived, and perpetuated the germs

of material and spiritual civilization, which were to reclothe the new world with life and beauty.

This country has come to a crisis in its material prosperity. The unequalled resources of the land, the marvelous material growth of the nation, have produced a giant whose frame is too large for his vitals. The time has come again to this nation, as it came to those before us, when virtue is its only salvation. The problems which confront it, material problems though they be, cannot be solved upon the low plane of material interest. They will not be solved by men's "voting for their pocket-books." *Laissez-faire* will never solve them. As it was in the days of Noah, men went on eating and drinking, buying and selling, borrowing and lending, marrying and being divorced, and giving little heed to preachers of righteousness, who were warning them of impending ruin unless they began to seek, not each his own, but each his neighbor's welfare. There is no safety, no material safety, any longer, except in the law of Christ. Materially man is the creature and the sport of circumstances. Hence he has no right to feel secure upon any material foundation. The Rocky Mountain range may sink under the ocean any day. There is not a business firm which no combination of circumstances can wreck, and at the last extremity men will count for more than assets. There is in the whole texture of human life such an inter-



weaving of the material and spiritual that, without any interference with the natural run of events, crises like that of the deluge are occurring daily, in which material prosperity or even existence are staked upon spiritual standing. Men are satisfied with material success, with amassing fortunes, organizing enterprises, enlarging their business, building houses, planning profitable schemes, while they forget that, according to all the laws of probability, the time will come when nothing will float these things above the rising tide of adversity but the fact that, like Noah, they have walked with God.

We must make a very broad distinction between the material and the spiritual, between the animal man and the spiritual man, between God's dispensation of nature, so-called, and his dispensation of grace. The old heresy has been refuted a thousand times, that a man's or a nation's temporal success or failure, and their worth, are reciprocally the measure of each other. God sends his rain and sunshine upon the just and unjust impartially, and the wicked often seem to prosper, and do. But even philosophy and science are denying the absoluteness of the distinction between the material and the spiritual. The study of human nature in the light of the spirit of the Son of Man shows that, amid all the countless coincidences of human life, it is sure to happen at some time, that even temporal suc-

cess or ruin will hinge upon spiritual relationships. A deluge will engulf every man, body and soul and spirit, the whole material universe will be arrayed against every man, the stars in their courses will fight against, the solid continents will shrink away and refuse to uphold the feet of every man, who ceases to walk with God, and who breaks away from spiritual fellowship with God. But in the same light of the spirit of the Son of Man we may also learn that, in some way or other, the soul which loyally maintains its spiritual relationships will be borne up superior to every misfortune, and be set down, after the waters of grief and trial have subsided, upon the solid mountain of the Rock of Ages.

## XV.

### THE WINE-TILTERS.

Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity : therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will send unto him them that pour off [tilt], and they shall pour him off ; and they shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles [jars] in pieces. And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel their confidence. — JEREMIAH xlviii. 11-13.

THE figures of speech used in this prophecy need to be understood, before the meaning can become plain. The people for whom the prophet was writing were familiar with the processes of making wine, to which he here refers. Each family pressed out its grapes, and left the juice standing in vats or jars to ferment and cast its sediment to the bottom of the vessel. Then, without disturbing this sediment or lees, the wine was poured off into other receptacles, and again left for another period of fermentation. This might be repeated many times before the wine was called perfect in tone and flavor. It is easy to see that without pumps or siphons this racking was a delicate operation. A little want of skill might stir up the sediment,

and liberate its foul gases to bubble through the wine, and spoil its taste and degrade its quality. For this reason certain men — tilters they were called, because they skillfully tilted the vessels — made a business of going from house to house to pour off the wine in the best way, so as to stir up the lees as little as might be, and yet get off as much of the wine as possible from them. If these professional pourers, or tilters, happened not to visit a house and the wine was left unchanged in the vats, the processes of fermentation would go on all the same, and the wine would be wine, but it would never be perfect wine; it would reach a limit in its power of self-purification. It would indeed separate its sediment and precipitate it to the bottom, and the coarsest of it would remain there. But it would breed foul gases and nasty flavors, which would rise again into the wine and spoil its tone and retard its ripening. The fermentation principle was able to perfect its work only with the help of the tilters to remove the sediment, which it kept casting to the bottom.

Jeremiah utters a prophecy both of judgment and of hope concerning Moab. Moab was far behind Israel in real development of character, and he gives the reason. Moab and Israel had begun with equal advantages. They had inherited the same germs of civilization. The common belief that this was the case was expressed in the tradition that Moab was descended from the righteous

Lot, the nephew of Abraham. In spite, therefore, of their frequent quarrels, they always recognized this tribal kinship. It was a question, therefore, that naturally came to the mind of a prophet and seer, why Israel had made so steady advances, while the Moabites were about where they had been for centuries, were worse indeed, since national stagnation is itself retrogression. The two nations were alike in ancestry and in original faith. And this made the resemblance particularly close, since that was, and the prophets of Israel knew it was, a vital faith, a fermentation principle, which, yeast-like, drew its own distinctions in its own way, and carried one set of impulses to the top, and sent another set down toward the bottom. This was the spirit, and it was the same in both Lot and Abraham. The root of the matter was in them both. So the prophet attributes the apathy and decay of Moab, not to his not having had the right kind of possibilities in him, but to the mere fact that he had had a more peaceful career than Israel. The two nations had, as he believed, begun at the same point, and with the same internal possibilities. The difference was that Israel had never had the opportunity to settle on his lees. After a period of rest long enough to permit the spiritual principle in him to precipitate the coarsest elements to the bottom, he was always removed just in time to leave the worst of it behind him.

Jacob's life was an epitome of that of the nation,

if indeed he be not a personification of it. See how his character was clarified by the vicissitudes of fortune. When he first appears, he is about as unpromising and unattractive a mixture of enterprise and dishonesty as is found in history. But there was a kind of spiritual ferment in him, that brought the better part of him to the top, at times at least, even though it was only when he dreamed. He was passably good when asleep, and this slight advantage on the side of goodness was seized by circumstances. When he moved on, as he seemed doomed to do, he always took it with him and left part of his meanness behind. It is a hard thing to say of any man, but it was true of Jacob, that his mother was his evil genius. When his sin and hers made him a fugitive, he left her behind. He was a better man after his dream than before, and when he came to Padan-Aram he proved equal to a sincere love for Rachel. Then the process of spiritual fermentation went on, and separated the better elements from the worse, until Jacob, like many a modern, came to be living two lives, one in his home, ruled by his better self, and one in his business, ruled by his old cunning. Then came another visit of the tilters ; Jacob's business relations were broken up, and he went back to his own country, which he could not enter until he had left most of his worst self behind. Then he buried Rachel, and his love for her, which had done so much for him, was sealed and consum-

mated in the sanctuary of his soul. But still other unsettlements and migrations, still other visits of the pourers, were needed before Jacob was fit to be ranked among the patriarchs.

What is related as having befallen him was often repeated in the history of the nation named after him. Nomads, slaves, refugees, outlaws, wanderers, invaders, shepherd soldiers, husbandmen who tilled with weapons girded by their sides, again slaves and captives, — such had been the fate of Israel. Peace never lasted more than long enough to prepare for war. Prosperity continued only long enough to tempt the rapacity of the spoiler. Success only added to the bitterness of subsequent defeat. How Israel must have envied the quiet and security of Moab, perched away in the hills, inaccessible to armies, safely out to one side of the highway where marched and counter-marched the contending forces of hostile empires, undisputed in its occupancy of the soil and its perpetuation of institutions, customs, and traditions. The tilters never visited Moab. Moab was not led into captivity. Moab was not hunted into the desert. Moab had been at ease from the first. Israel must have found it hard to see the justice of such favoritism. Did the great God love Moab better than Israel the chosen?

But look into it once. The true spirit had been in both at the first. Its ferment could not permit either of them to remain in the moral and spiritual



infancy that marked the other nations about, which had it not. It wrought in Moab as in Israel. Moab knew more than his neighbors about moral distinctions. He had clearer views of truth. The more truly spiritual came to the top and the coarser fell to the bottom in his life, as in that of Israel. This is intimated by the legend that Moab knew a prophet of the higher rank and sent for Balaam. But in the same story of Moab's bargaining with Balaam we detect the fatal corruption which had been wrought by the continued presence in Moab of those baser, more sensual elements, which had been only precipitated, and had not been racked off. This glimpse into the spiritual life of Moab shows what would happen in the wine that stood on its lees. Not only the flavor of fermentation was there, but mingled with it and spoiling it was also the flavor of decomposition in the sediment, rising like the poisonous bubbles that witches are fabled to gather from foul bogs. There were high moral and religious perceptions mingled with a sacrilegious purpose to degrade them to personal or political ends. It was not because the Moabites were ignorant heathen, but because they were reprobate and renegade believers in the high God, that they proposed to hire a prophet of Jehovah to curse the people of Jehovah. The process of purification, through the spiritual fermentation that was going on, had not only reached its limit, but the good it had done had

been worse than undone by the counteraction of the principle of decay set up in the lower nature, now that it had been separated from the higher and left to itself. With Israel it had been different, for every now and then Israel had been compelled to move on, and every time he moved he carried with him the best and left the worst behind, where it could no longer corrupt him.

The different experiences of Moab and of Israel are the experiences of many of us. It needs not only God's spirit, it needs also his providences to bring us out into the ripeness and sweetness of a mature Christian experience. The providences of God often seem to deal very hardly with many. The particular purpose of God in his providential operations you and I cannot fathom ; but that all the unsettlings to which he subjects us may become means of grace, many know by rich experience.

The tilters have visited them, and poured them from vessel to vessel. They have never become firmly settled in one place or in any one manner of life or upon any object of affection, but just then their peace was broken up, and they were compelled to begin all over new again. The loss of a position at a critical period, the failure of a business enterprise, the death or desertion of friends, the breaking up of homes, the breaking down of health, — these things have come along in succession just as they supposed, each time, that everything was settled, and they were at ease for

life. They see their neighbors living on with no such overturnings, like Moab, in easy circumstances. They cannot understand it.

But now, my brother, whose life has been, like Israel's, that of a wanderer and a stranger on the earth, with no abiding-place, with no secure employment, with no certain income, with no continued robustness of health, with no long lease of cherished companionship, — review your history. First and most important, has there been a spiritual fermentation within you, always striving to bring the best to the top and to cast the worst to the bottom? If there has not, then all the pourings of the pourers continued forever will not leave you any better. When you are poured from vessel to vessel, you take with you what is uppermost and leave behind what is undermost. If there is no tendency for the good to get and keep uppermost, the pouring will never result in permanent and complete separation of the good and evil in you. But if the spirit be in you, so that, every time the pourer appears in the form of an affliction to disturb your peace, he finds that the worst thing about you is the thing which is at the very bottom, he will pour you off and leave it behind, and you will be rid of it. Thus at each change, distressing though it be at the time, the last remnant of some evil habit, or some false notion of life, or some corrupt desire, or some base appetite was left behind you forever. Your growth in spiritual refine-

ment in your period of ease had indeed precipitated these things, so that they would never have come to the top again in their old gross form ; but they would have refined themselves into some other subtler form of evil and have poisoned your life, as the sediment in the wine cask sent up its fetid gases. We often see a spiritual life tainted by what is really the sublimation of a sensuality or an avarice, which has been put under by the influence of the spirit of the Christ, but has not been removed.

Moab had been at ease from his youth. The tilters had not visited him to pour him from vessel to vessel, neither had he gone into captivity. He counted himself more highly favored than Israel, whose life had been a series of misfortunes. But Israel, largely by the help of these misfortunes, had outgrown the low forms of worship of his early life, had refined his conception of his God, had brought his service into a high spiritual plane, had divested it of most of the remnants of the sensuality and even bestiality that once characterized it, had, in short, grown ashamed of Bethel, the sanctuary of his honored ancestor Jacob, and had gone up to Mount Zion to worship ; while all these years Moab had never outgrown that form of worship and service which the idea of Chemosh inspired. Her spiritual life had been poisoned, and her spiritual growth had long since ceased ; the processes of purification had reached their

limit. And the best gospel the prophet could preach to Moab was the prediction that she should begin to pass through experiences like those of Israel. Israel was therefore the more fortunate, inasmuch as she had already endured and profited by these things.

It is common to distinguish between the fortunate and the unfortunate classes. To which of these classes we shall belong we can do a little to determine, but not everything. Be we never so wise, prudent, careful, and industrious, misfortune can easily find us out. It is the habit of many who have been favored by fortune to say that every man can succeed if he sets out to. Well, he simply cannot, in the sense in which they mean success, especially under a system where the success of one is so largely dependent upon the comparative failure of others. Not many of them succeeded because they set out to succeed. What is called chance had not a little to do at points with this success. Not one man in a thousand can command success independent of circumstances, and he who can did not himself originate the combination of abilities which gave him that peculiar power. It was usually inherited from the misfortunes of his ancestors. Few of us who to-day belong to the class of fortunates can take all the credit to ourselves, and few of those who are unfortunate deserve the whole blame. If the chief thing in life were to get on the side of fortune,

life would be a game of chance with the dice loaded for adversity, and no secure bank for any winnings one might happen to make.

But the sure thing — and this is the gospel we preach — the sure thing of which we would give men the hint, is that an element can be introduced into life which can so far transcend the distinction between fortunate and unfortunate as even to reverse it.

I should be the last person to say that the question of fortunate and unfortunate classes in a community is not an important one. Whatever the causes, — ignorance, weakness, shiftlessness, unfair legal systems — which produce unnecessary inequalities, they should, if possible, be removed. If they are common causes, we should make common cause against them. If they are national, national efforts should be put forth. If they may be wisely legislated against, legislation should be employed. The gospel we preach is not one which forbids men's trying to better their individual or common circumstances. It is not a gospel of political, social, industrial fatalism, and only of individual and other-worldly optimism. It is not a gospel which says, "peace, peace," while the elements of social or industrial warfare and anarchy are preparing themselves through the wild and unpractical radicalism of one class and the selfish and stupid conservatism of another. The gospel is a social saving force, a political saving

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force, an industrial saving force, as well as an individual saving force. It does not save society through the individual, any more than it saves the individual through society. It strikes at all angles. Two classes of persons would rather we did not preach the whole gospel : those whose personal lives need renovating demand that we preach a gospel of social reconstruction and let the individual conscience alone ; and those who with irreproachable personal habits profit by social injustice wish us to preach individual regeneration and let society alone. And when this issue is raised, a bitterness like the ancient *odium theologicum* is manifested. It looks as though the next great schism in the church might come along these lines. To-day the best definition of a Catholic church is one which refuses to take sides on this issue, but maintains the complete gospel, necessary and effective for the whole body of humanity, both in its individual and in its corporate characters. "I believe in the holy Catholic Church."

I have thus digressed because the particular message I have at this time is one of comfort and hope and contentment for the individual, and I do not wish it to be supposed, as it sometimes is, that such a message ought to act as a sedative to legitimate social discontent or agitation. It should not be forgotten that this gospel for the individual is the product of a social evolution, and that our text refers, not to the individual, but



to the respective national experiences of Israel and of Moab. They were nations, not men. The same laws operate in society and in the individual, and the same redemption is needed, and it is by no artificial or accidental analogy that we find the experiences of those two nations fit us as individuals. It is because of a fundamental identity of nature. A gospel which does not apply to both society and the individual will soon cease to apply to either.

To return, then: the word of truth and comfort which ought to come to each life is that there is a way by which misfortune may become an inestimable aid in the perfection of character. If there be this element of fermentation in one's life, which never ceases to separate the better from the worse, and to bring the one toward the top and throw the other to the bottom, it may not be a very strong tendency; but if only it be there each time an unsettlement comes, it brings one off better than it found him. Some evil or worthless habit has gone to the bottom, and in the change it has been left behind, while the perhaps only half-formed good habit went over into the new circumstances. Where you are, perhaps your efficiency is hindered by a habit you have. You have tried with partial success to overcome it. Your final success is prevented by the fact that the habit itself has partly determined your environment. But now you are obliged to change.

From most points of view that is a misfortune, yet it does free you from the incumbrances which your habit had put in your way. Had you not gained a partial mastery, your change of position would not have bettered you. But in giving you a chance to finish the work of conquering your habit, the misfortune was transformed into good fortune.

So the person who has this new life, this yeast or leaven of the Christ-character, will not only make the most of what comes to him, he will learn even to glory, as the prophet of Israel did, in the fact that the tilters had poured him from vessel to vessel, so that each time he left behind something of the sediment of sensuality, of animality, of worldliness, of avarice, of ill temper, of grossness of conception concerning God, of dull ignorance of spiritual things. He grows ashamed of Bethel, with its coarse and materialistic bargaining with God, and he goes up to Zion to a purer service of a truer God. He counts it joy when he falls into divers trials, knowing that the trial of his faith will generate a power of endurance, and he is willing that this should have its perfect work, that he may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

I know I speak to some who have thus been visited by the tilters again and again, in whom each successive affliction has left a purer liquor of spirituality with a more perfect flavor and a more enduring quality, until to-day the purity of

sainthood has begun to manifest itself to all about them. We cannot rejoice that they have been afflicted, for a dread mystery is there, but we can rejoice that the leaven of the divine life was so in them that the results have been blessed. Some again may be like Moab. They have the root of the matter in them. The yeast is there. They come of goodly stock, and did at one time yield themselves to the Christ, who perpetuates into this age the spiritual germ which wrought in Israel and Moab. But they have been at ease from the first. The tilters have let them alone. The pourers have passed them by. What might, therefore, have been a gross appetite has been put down, but, not having been eliminated, it has risen again in subtle vapors into the higher life, so that it is as though their spirituality had been sensualized. Their avarice cannot make them crack safes or go into fraudulent bankruptcy; but it blinds them to the nature of the source of some of their profits, or it steals their best service from God and man. Their religion remains about as it began. It is no higher in its type than it was twenty years ago. They are not ashamed of Chemosh, as Israel became ashamed of Bethel. And while they felicitate themselves upon their freedom from misfortune, and perhaps accept it as a mark of divine favor, it may be they could pray no more timely petition than that which we sing so thoughtlessly, —

“Nearer, my God, to thee,  
E'en though it be a cross  
That raiseth me.”

“Where slopes the beach to the setting sun,  
On the Pescadoro shore,  
Forever and ever the restless surf  
Rolls up with its sullen roar,

“And grasping the pebbles in white hands,  
And chafing them together,  
And grinding them against the cliffs,  
In storm and sunny weather,

“It gives them never any rest,  
All day, all night, the pain  
Of their long agony sobs on,  
Sinks, and then swells again.

“And seekers come from every clime,  
To search with eager care  
For those whose rest has been the least:  
For such have grown most fair.

“But yonder round a point of rock,  
In a quiet sheltered cove,  
Where storm ne'er breaks and sea ne'er comes,  
The seekers never rove.

“The pebbles lie 'neath the sunny sky  
Quiet forevermore:  
In dreams of everlasting peace  
They sleep upon the shore.

“But ugly and rough and jagged still  
Are they left by the passing years;  
For they miss the beat of the angry storms  
And the surf that drips in tears.

“The turmoil hard of the pitiless sea  
The pebble turns to beauteous gem :  
So they who escape the agony  
Must also miss the diadem.”

This is a law of human life. That progress toward perfection, which Moad missed through good fortune and Israel gained through ill, culminated in the cross of Him who was made perfect through suffering.

His is the gospel we preach; not that trials and losses, that pain and bereavement, that sore disappointments and disillusionments are good in themselves; but that there is a way by which all these shall work together for good. We may, indeed, not have to endure all the experiences of those through whom the Christ-life first wrought itself out in the world; for when once that life had fulfilled itself, its grace and beauty of holiness became self-imparting, so that we may become partakers of his grace and theirs, whose sufferings were not only for their own salvation, but for that of the whole world.

When we have come thus far, we may gain a glimpse of a still more profound and precious secret of the gospel of Christhood. Jeremiah, who gave utterance to the words of this text, was greater in his life than in his words. The highest level of revelation is reached in history, and Jeremiah was a man of history. It was the memory of Jeremiah's unmerited sufferings for others'

sins which was the saving potency that preserved and sanctified the hopes of Israel during the great exile, and carried her forward in her Messianic development. The contemplation of it gave to the eye of her later prophet the first clear view of the master truth: that the noblest end of suffering is not even our own purification and complete salvation, but that of others; that the highest law of this universe yet known is not that of discipline, high though that be, but the law of vicariousness. It was the history of Jeremiah which suggested those marvelous words, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed."

When, if ever, we have come up to the level of that idea,—the idea of Jeremiah's life which transcended his thought,—and it has taken a firm hold upon us, then may we learn, what a few souls have known, the luxury of pain, in the exultant faith that, though we cannot unravel the web of cause and effect, we do actually share in the sufferings of him who is thereby taking away the sins of the world. When we consider how closely interwoven are all life's interests, it is not impossible to understand in part, how not only our own sins but the sins of others are racked off by the pains which we endure, to understand at least enough to give partial warrant and power of realization to that faith. And when partial know-

ledge and triumphant faith thus unite to pour into the heart of the sufferer the conviction that not a pang is without avail in the cleansing away of sin, then like the soldier who, flushed with love of his cause and assurance of victory, feels wounds only as an intoxication, torture and pain will be a stimulus to a higher exultation, and with each throb of agony the victim will cry in ecstasy, "Another sin vanquished!" and the law of the Christ shall be fulfilled. Thus pain shall be transmuted to the noblest bliss. Such a miracle this gospel is able to perform.











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